

Meeting of the

CABINET

Wednesday, 8 April 2009 at 5.30 p.m.

A G E N D A – SECTION ONE

VENUE

Committee Room C1, 1st Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

Members:

Councillor Lutfur Rahman (Chair)	– (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Sirajul Islam (Vice-Chair)	– (Deputy Leader of the Council)
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	– (Lead Member, Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships)
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	– (Lead Member, Culture and Leisure)
Councillor Anwara Ali	– (Lead Member, Health & Wellbeing)
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 Joshua Peck	– (Lead Member, Resources and Performance)
Councillor Abdal Ullah	– (Lead Member, Cleaner, Safer, Greener)

[Note: The quorum for this body is 3 Members].

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact:

Angus Taylor, Democratic Services,

Tel: 020 7364 4333, E-mail: angus.taylor@towerhamlets.gov.uk

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 8 APRIL 2009

5.30 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Pages 1 - 2)

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. See attached note from the Chief Executive.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

PAGE
NUMBER
3 - 14

WARD(S)
AFFECTED

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th March 2009.

4. DEPUTATIONS & PETITIONS

To receive any deputations or petitions.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's advice of Key Issues or Questions in relation to Unrestricted Business to be considered

To receive any advice of key issues or questions in relation to the unrestricted business of the Cabinet, arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7th April 2009.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(Under provisions of Article 6 Para 6.02 V of the Constitution).

Nil items.

UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

- | | | | |
|------|---|---------|-----------|
| 6 .1 | Amendments to the Council's Lettings Policy (CAB 138/089) | 15 - 20 | All Wards |
| 6 .2 | Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (CAB 139/089) | 21 - 70 | All Wards |
| 6 .3 | Communities, Localities & Cultural Services Directorate Capital Programme 2009/2010 (CAB 140/089) | 71 - 80 | All Wards |

7. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Nil items.

8. A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

- | | | | |
|------|---|-----------|-----------|
| 8 .1 | Commission into the Public Safety of Young People in Tower Hamlets (CAB 141/089) | 81 - 124 | All Wards |
| 8 .2 | Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report 2008/9, Business Plan 2007/10, Summary of Lord Laming's report and outcome of Serious Case Review Evaluations (CAB 142/089) | 125 - 154 | All Wards |

9. A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Nil items.

10. ONE TOWER HAMLETS

- | | | | |
|-------|---|-----------|-----------|
| 10 .1 | Age, Race, Religion/Belief and Sexual Orientation Equality Schemes 2009-2012 (CAB 143/089) | 155 - 346 | All Wards |
| 10 .2 | Annual Report on the Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy and Progression of Under-Represented Groups in the Council (CAB 144/089) - To Follow | | All Wards |

11. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

12. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

Nil items.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda, the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985, the Press and Public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government, Act 1972”.

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (PINK)

The Exempt / Confidential (Pink) Committee papers in the Agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

- | | PAGE
NUMBER | WARD(S)
AFFECTED |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 14. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES | | |
| Nil items. | | |
| 15. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | | |
| 15 .1 Chair's advice of Key Issues or Questions in relation to Exempt / Confidential Business to be considered. | | |
| Nil items. | | |
| 15 .2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee | | |
| (Under provisions of Article 6 Para 6.02 V of the Constitution). | | |
| Nil items. | | |
| EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION | | |
| 16. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE | | |
| Nil items. | | |
| 17. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY | | |
| Nil items. | | |

18. **A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY**

Nil items.

19. **A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

Nil items.

20. **ONE TOWER HAMLETS**

Nil items.

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

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

Nil items.

SCRUTINY PROCESS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on **Tuesday 5th May 2009** may scrutinise provisional decisions made in respect of any of the reports attached, if it is "called in" by **five** or more Councillors except where the decision involves a recommendation to full Council.

The deadline for "Call-in" is: Friday 17th April 2009 **(5.00 p.m.)**

The deadline for Deputations is: Wednesday 29th April 2009 **(5.00 p.m.)**

Councillors wishing to "call-in" a provisional decision, or members of the public wishing to submit a deputation request, should contact: **John Williams**
Service Head Democratic Services:
020 7364 4205

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Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This note is guidance only. Members should consult the Council's Code of Conduct for further details. Note: Only Members can decide if they have an interest therefore they must make their own decision. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending at a meeting.

Declaration of interests for Members

Where Members have a personal interest in any business of the authority as described in paragraph 4 of the Council's Code of Conduct (contained in part 5 of the Council's Constitution) then s/he must disclose this personal interest as in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Code. Members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting and certainly no later than the commencement of the item or where the interest becomes apparent.

You have a **personal interest** in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- (a) An interest that you must **register**
- (b) An interest that is not on the register, but where the well-being or financial position of you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association, is likely to be affected by the business of your authority more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision.

Where a personal interest is declared a Member may stay and take part in the debate and decision on that item.

What constitutes a prejudicial interest? - Please refer to paragraph 6 of the adopted Code of Conduct.

Your personal interest will also be a prejudicial interest in a matter if (a), (b) and either (c) or (d) below apply:-

- (a) A member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think that your personal interests are so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interests; AND
- (b) The matter does not fall within one of the exempt categories of decision listed in paragraph 6.2 of the Code; AND EITHER
- (c) The matter affects your financial position or the financial interest of a body with which you are associated; or
- (d) The matter relates to the determination of a licensing or regulatory application

The key points to remember if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting:-

- i. You must declare that you have a prejudicial interest, and the nature of that interest, as soon as that interest becomes apparent to you; and
- ii. You must leave the room for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision unless (iv) below applies; and

- iii. You must not seek to improperly influence a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.
- iv. If Members of the public are allowed to speak or make representations at the meeting, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, by statutory right or otherwise (e.g. planning or licensing committees), you can declare your prejudicial interest but make representations. However, you must immediately leave the room once you have finished your representations and answered questions (if any). You cannot remain in the meeting or in the public gallery during the debate or decision on the matter.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.40 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2009

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

Members Present:

Councillor Lutfur Rahman (Chair)	(Leader of the Council)
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	(Lead Member, Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships)
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	(Lead Member, Culture and Leisure)
Councillor Anwara Ali	(Lead Member, Health & Wellbeing)
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 M. Shahid Ali	
Councillor Tim Archer	
Councillor Abdul Asad	(Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	(Leader Liberal Democrat Group and Scrutiny Lead Member: A Healthy Community)
Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader Conservative Group)
Councillor Fazlul Haque	

Others Present:

Officers Present:

Lutfur Ali	– (Assistant Chief Executive)
Isobel Cattermole	– (Service Head, Resources)
Kevan Collins	– (Corporate Director, Children's Services)
Aman Dalvi	– (Corporate Director, Development & Renewal)
Tony Finnegan	– (Communications Officer)

Isabella Freeman	– (Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services))
John Goldup	– (Corporate Director, Adults Health & Wellbeing)
Dean Grant	– (Diary Secretary to Lead Members)
Stephen Halsey	– (Corporate Director, Communities, Localities & Culture)
Fiona Heyland	– (Waste Services Group Manager)
Chris Holme	– (Service Head, Resources)
Helen Jenner	– (Service Head, Early Years Children & Learning)
Kevin Kewin	– (Policy Manager)
Paul Leeson	– (Finance Manager, Development & Renewal)
Lolita Muhammad	– (Parking Appeals Officer)
Jim Ricketts	– (Corporate Accounting Manager)
Martin Smith	– (Chief Executive)
Claire Symonds	– (Service Head, Customer Access)
Louise Fleming	– Senior Committee Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Chris Naylor, Corporate Director of Resources.

Apologies for lateness were received on behalf of Martin Smith, Chief Executive.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ohid Ahmed declared a personal interest in Agenda item 12.2 “Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 Third Report – Housing Revenue Account” (CAB 136/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the Housing Revenue Account and Councillor Ahmed was a member of the Tower Hamlets Homes Board.

Councillor Sirajul Islam declared a personal interest in Agenda item 12.2 “Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 Third Report – Housing Revenue Account” (CAB 136/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the Housing Revenue Account and Councillor Islam was a tenant of Tower Hamlets Homes.

Noted.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

Resolved

That the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th February 2009 be approved and signed by the Chair, as a correct record of the proceedings.

4. DEPUTATIONS & PETITIONS

Nil Items.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 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 advice/ comments arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10th March 2009.

Councillor Asad, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, addressed the Cabinet and thanked Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, for his Scrutiny Spotlight. He advised that the final remaining Scrutiny Spotlight for the 2008/09 municipal year would be presented by Councillor Lutfur Rahman, Leader of the Council.

Councillor Asad advised that the Lead Member for Children Services had reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-12 and the Committee's comments were tabled. The Committee welcomed the extensive work which had been carried out and asked the Cabinet to monitor the progress with the Action Plan.

Resolved

That the advice/ 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 advice/ comments related.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

There had been no requests to call in for further consideration any decisions made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 11th February 2009.

6. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

6.1 Review of Local Land Charges Search Fees (CAB 128/089)

Mr Chris Holme, Services Head Resources, briefly introduced the report and responded to the question tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny. He advised the Cabinet that the fee for a personal search was set by legislation. Fees for a full personal search and a full official search were

discretionary. However, Members must take government guidelines into consideration when setting fees, in that the fees must not be significantly higher than the cost of providing the service. The Cabinet was advised that the proposed fees also reflected the current climate and the downturn in the housing market.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposed official full search fee and the full personal search fee for the Local Land Charges service, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report (CAB 128/089), to be effective from 1st April 2009, be approved; and
- (2) That it be noted that the Local Authorities (England) (Charges for Property Searches) Regulations 2008 require that the Land Charge Service operate as a separate trading account with effect from 1 April 2009, and must break even over a rolling three year period (as set out in paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of the report (CAB 128/089). This legislation was passed by Parliament on 16 December 2008.

6.2 Development of a Municipal Waste Strategy (CAB 129/089)

Mr Stephen Halsey, Corporate Director Communities, Localities and Culture, briefly introduced the report and highlighted the key recommendations. In response to questions from Members, Mr Halsey advised the Cabinet that he had liaised with both the North and the East London Waste Authorities and concluded that entering into a contract with either would not be the appropriate way forward and was, in some instances, contrary to the Council's Procurement rules.

Ms Fiona Heyland, Waste Services Group Manager, in response to questions from Members, advised that the first part of the Strategy would achieve waste minimisation and prevention, which was a priority for the Council. The Cabinet also noted the importance of using alternatives to Landfill, and that residents of the Fairfield Road Recycling Centre were supportive of the strategy.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Authority commences a procurement process under the EU Public Contracts Regulation for a Merchant Capacity (spare/available capacity at facilities that are currently operating or are due to be delivered in the near future by the commercial sector) and/or a Joint Venture Project for long term Municipal Waste treatment and disposal solutions as set out in paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.11 and 5.4.1 to 5.4.6 of the report (CAB 129/089);
2. That it be agreed that the procurement process runs concurrently with development of the Municipal Waste Strategy as set out in proposed timetable in section 5.5 of the report (CAB 129/089);

3. That the link between the development of the new Municipal Waste Strategy and the development of the Core Strategy particularly in relation to the potential medium to long term option of developing a waste fuelled Combined Heat and Power facility in Fish Island or elsewhere within the Borough be noted;
4. That it be noted that the current Medium Term Financial Strategy until 2010/11 includes necessary Budget provision to meet the costs of Waste Disposal, but that from 2011/12 it is anticipated that additional funding will be required (which has been included in the Medium Term Financial Plan) to meet the costs of a new residual waste treatment solution or the cost implications of the Authority continuing with Landfill Disposal;
5. That the actions to be taken to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness and the reduction of duplication in terms of Waste Education and Outreach services be noted. The potential changes to these areas will be carried out in parallel with the development of the Waste Strategy as set out in paragraphs 5.1.3 to 5.1.5 of the report (CAB 129/089);

7. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

7.1 Children and Young People's Plan 2009 -12 (CAB 130/089)

Mr Kevan Collins, Corporate Director Children's Services, briefly presented the report and summarised the salient points. In response to the comments tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, he advised that Priority 2 – Significantly Reduce Bullying would tackle all bullying, but that the specific issue of homophobic bullying would be worked into the detail of the plan. He also reported that a significant amount of work was being carried out in respect of engaging children and young people in the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

The Cabinet noted that the Council had recently been awarded the Beacon Award for preventing Child Poverty. Members welcomed the Plan and noted the importance of working constructively with the Council's Partners in tackling Child Poverty.

In response to Members questions, Mr Collins advised that the proposed change of the Directorate name to "Children, Schools and Families Directorate" reflected the name of the relevant government department. He also informed the Cabinet that the bullying policies of all schools would be monitored closely. It was important that schools co-operate with the Council's Social Services.

Resolved:

1. That the draft Children and Young People's Plan 2009 -12 at Appendix 1 of the report (CAB 130/089) be endorsed and that Full Council be recommended to approve the plan subject to any appropriate amendments to reflect the views of Members;
2. That the Corporate Director of Children's Services, after consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services, be authorised to make appropriate amendments to the Children and Young People's Plan in advance of consideration by Full Council;
3. That the proposed change of name from 'Children's Service's Directorate' to 'Children, Schools and Families Directorate' as set out in paragraph 4.6 of the report (CAB 130/089), be agreed.

7.2 Results of the Consultation on the 2010/11 Admission Arrangements for Tower Hamlets Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools (CAB 131/089)

Mr Kevan Collins, Corporate Director Children's Services, briefly presented the report and responded to the questions tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He advised that the issue of admission arrangements would be raised at all Governing Body meetings. In respect of nursery/play groups, the Council provided enough places for every child in the Borough, however could not make attendance at the groups mandatory. The growth of buildings provision would deal with the increases in population in the Borough.

In response to Members questions, Mr Collins advised that very few children and young people had to travel out of the Borough to school (approximately 5%) whereas the figure in other London boroughs was as much as 30-40%. The Council was working closely with the Faith schools in the Borough to ensure the welfare of all students and to develop teaching and leadership. However, not all students at Faith schools were from Tower Hamlets. It was noted that the key was to ensure that every school in the Borough achieved excellence.

Resolved:

1. That the admissions criteria to nursery schools, classes and early years units and primary schools be amended as set out at paragraph 4.1 of the report (CAB 131/089);
2. That re adoption be agreed as set out in (a) – (c) below:
 - (a) the primary co-ordinated admissions scheme, as set out at paragraph 5.1 of the report (CAB 131/089);
 - (b) the secondary co-ordinated admissions scheme as set out at paragraph 6.1 of the report (CAB 131/089)
 - (c) Tower Hamlets as the "relevant area" for admissions purposes as set out at paragraph 7.1 (CAB 131/089)

3. That the recommendation for the oversubscription criteria to 6th forms, as explained in paragraph 6.2 of the report (CAB 131/089), be agreed; and
4. That the recommendation to retain the current method for measuring home to school distance, as set out in paragraph 7.3 of the report (CAB 131/089), be agreed.

8. A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

There were no items to be considered.

9. A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

There were no items to be considered.

10. ONE TOWER HAMLETS

There were no items to be considered.

10.1 Local Area Agreement (LAA) - Refresh (CAB 132/089)

Mr Kevin Kewin, Policy Manager, presented the report and advised that negotiations on indicators were ongoing. Mr Lutfur Ali, Assistant Chief Executive, responded to the question tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, advising that target levels were being reconsidered in respect of housing delivery due to the economic downturn. It was noted that there was a proposed initiative to invest £20 million into Right to Buy Homes.

In response to Members' questions, Mr Ali advised that there had been a 6% improvement in the 3rd Sector Strategy and it was noted that PI N17 had been deferred by central government rather than the Council. Members requested that the appropriate Lead Member be consulted on Performance Indicators to enable them to feed into the process at an earlier stage; and that baseline data be included in future reports.

Resolved:

1. That the Local Area Agreement, attached at appendix A to the report (CAB 132/089), be endorsed;
2. That the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make appropriate and necessary amendments to the LAA in advance of final submission and publication; and
3. That the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to prepare the revision proposal for submission to the Secretary of State.

10.2 Future of Out of Hours Telephone Service (CAB 133/089)

Ms Claire Symonds, Service Head Customer Access, presented the report and responded to the questions tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was not known how many of the 60,000 calls received were from RSL properties. However, the Council charged the RSLs £20 per order which amounted to approximately £46,000 for the year and equated to approximately 10% of the total call volume. This would continue to be monitored. Members welcomed the improved service to residents and the better support for staff.

Resolved:

1. That the signing of an Access Agreement to join the Pan London Out Of Hours (PLOOH) service from 1st April 2009 for the life of the Framework Agreement (ie until September 2012), be agreed; and
2. That it be noted that the contract will be monitored and can be terminated with immediate effect in the event of unsatisfactory performance.

10.3 Award of the Benefits' Resilience Contract (CAB 134/089)

Ms Claire Symonds, Service Head Customer Access, presented the report and responded to the questions tabled by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet was advised that the contract could be reviewed as often as Members wished. There was no intention to outsource the service of dealing with benefits. Potential savings of £171,000 had been identified. The Council provided information and training for the organisations within the Borough dealing with benefit claims. The contract for the successful service provider would comply with the Council's policies and procedures, including those of equal pay and workforce to reflect the community. Members highlighted the need to reduce agency staff whilst still maintaining a service for residents.

Resolved:

1. That the Resilience Contract be awarded to RB Solutions Limited commencing April 2009 for a period of two years with an option of a further one year extensions by agreement to a total maximum contract period of four years;
2. That it be noted that this contract will be monitored and can be terminated by the Authority at the end of each year of the contract should performance not be to the satisfaction of the Corporate Director of Resources; and
3. That it be agreed that the award of the Contract, referred to in resolution 1 above, will be on the basis of the conclusions of the tender

evaluation on the grounds that RB Solutions Limited have demonstrated that they meet the agreed criteria for the selection of the supplier through the contract process, and as follows:

- (i) the needs of the Authority as set out throughout the tendering process;
- (ii) the ability to demonstrate the required service outcomes in terms of cost and quality; and
- (iii) the ability to support the effective development of the Council's developing requirements of the Service, in terms of innovation and of further partnership growth to mutual advantage.

11. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Councillor Rofique Ahmed informed the Cabinet that free swimming had been secured for under 16s and over 60s, taking place on Fridays in the Borough.

12. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

12.1 Strategic Plan and Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring report 2008-09 Performance to 31st December 2008 (CAB 135/089)

Ms Claire Symonds, Service Head Customer Access, presented the report and advised that the transfer of the residual Housing Benefits Administration budget of £245,000 to Resources would not take place until further consultation had taken place with the new Corporate Director of Development and Renewal.

Resolved:

1. Consider any further action requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
2. That performance against targets for Strategic Indicators (Section 3 and **Appendix 1** of the report (CAB 135/089)), be noted;
3. That performance against targets for Priority Indicators (Section 3 and **Appendix 2** of the report (CAB 135/089)), be noted;
4. That the projected outturn for Directorate service budgets and for the total General Fund net expenditure budget for 2008/2009 in section 4.2 and **Appendices 3A-G** of the report (CAB 135/089), be noted;
5. That projected outturn for Directorate Trading Accounts for 2008/2009 as detailed in section 5.2 and **Appendix 4** of the report (CAB 135/089), be noted;

6. That the budget target adjustments as detailed in section 7, with the omission of 7.2.2.1 (transfer of residual Housing Benefits Administration budget to Resources) and **Appendix 5** of the report (CAB 135/089), be agreed;
7. That the performance against Service Improvement Growth targets in section 8.1 of the report (CAB 135/089), be noted;
8. That the projected spend against Area Based Grant (ABG) as detailed in section 9.1 of the report (CAB 135/089), be noted; and
9. That the 2008/09 performance against savings targets as detailed in section 10 and **Appendix 6** of the report (CAB 135/089), be noted.

12.2 Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 -Third Report - Housing Revenue Account (CAB 136/089) - To Follow

Mr Chris Holme, Service Head Resources, presented the report and highlighted the salient points. Councillor Marc Francis, Lead Member for Housing and Development advised the Cabinet that the lobbying of central government to reduce rent increases had been successful and that the Housing Minister had announced a 3.1% increase. The revised guidelines would amount to an approximately £2 per week increase. A report on the revised rent increase would be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Resolved:

1. That the projected outturn in respect of the 2008/09 Housing Revenue Account as detailed in Appendix A to the report (CAB 136/089), be noted; and
2. That the increase in the 2008/09 Management Fee for Tower Hamlets Homes from £39,253,000 to £39,823,000 in order to reflect the changes set out in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 of the report (CAB 136/089), be approved;

12.3 2008/09 Capital Programme: Capital Monitoring Report as at 31st December 2008 (CAB 137/089)

Mr Chris Holme, Service Head Resources, presented the report.

Resolved:

1. That the contents of the report (CAB 137/089), be noted;
2. That a capital estimate in the sum of £2.500 million for the acquisition of telephony equipment as set out in section 6 of the report (CAB 137/089), be adopted; and

3. That prudential borrowing of £2.500 million in 2009/10 to finance the purchase of the equipment as set out at Section 6 of the report (CAB 137/089), be approved.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contained information defined as exempt or confidential in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government, Act 1972.

14. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th February 2009 agreed.

15. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no items to be considered.

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

There were no items to be considered.

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

There were no items to be considered.

16. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

There were no items to be considered.

17. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

There were no items to be considered.

18. A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

There were no items to be considered.

19. A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

There were no items to be considered.

20. ONE TOWER HAMLETS

There were no items to be considered.

21. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

There were no items to be considered.

22. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

There were no items to be considered.

The meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Lutfur Rahman
Cabinet

Agenda Item 6.1

Committee Cabinet	Date 8 April 2009	Classification Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 138/089	Agenda No:
Report of: Corporate Director, Development & Renewal			Title: Amendments to the Council's Lettings Policy	
Author: Jackie Odunoye Service Head - Strategy, Regeneration & Sustainability.			Wards affected: All	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report recommends changes to the Council's existing Letting Policy following the Judicial Review hearing in the case of Mr Alam – v – London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the judgement issued by the High Court on 23 January 2009 (reference [2009] EWHC 44 (Admin)).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet agrees:

- 2.2 To amend paragraph 2.2.2 of the Lettings Policy (Community Group 2) as follows: *“to include persons who are statutorily homeless and who have an assessed priority need and are accepted as unintentionally homeless.”*
- 2.3 To amend paragraph 2.2.3 of the Lettings Policy (Community Group 3) as follows: *“to include persons who are statutorily homeless and who do not have an assessed priority need, and all other housing applicants who do not fall within groups 1,2 or 4”*
- 2.4 To amend paragraph 2.3 of the Lettings Policy as follows: *“Group 3 If you are not included in any of these other groups or have been assessed as homeless but are not in priority need, your application will normally be placed in Group 3”.*

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2007 Mr Alam applied to the Council for assistance under part 7 (Homelessness) of the Housing Act 1996. He was provided with temporary accommodation pending further investigation of his homeless application.
- 3.2 On July 23 2007 the Council determined that he was homeless and eligible for assistance but was not in priority need. This meant that although entitled to advice and assistance, the Council did not have a statutory duty to house him permanently and he was not entitled to retain his temporary accommodation. An internal review of this decision did not alter the outcome.
- 3.3 Mr Alam appealed against this decision in the county court. His appeal was dismissed on 16 April 2008. The Council agreed he could remain in his temporary accommodation pending further legal proceedings being undertaken by him.
- 3.4 Mr Alam had also made an application for permanent accommodation under part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. His application was accepted and he was placed in Community Group 3 in accordance with existing practice for homeless applicants who were not in priority need. Mr Alam brought further judicial review in respect of this decision.

BODY OF THE REPORT

- 3.5 The Judicial Review hearing was held in December 2008. Mr Alam claimed he had been incorrectly placed in Community Group 3 because according to the Council's Lettings Policy he should have been in Community Group 2.
- 3.6 The criteria for homeless cases in Community Group 2 states, *"those assessed by the Council as homeless under the Housing Act 1996 Part 7 and other Homeless households who have an assessed priority need"*. Mr Alam argued that this meant that as a homeless person he did not also have to be in priority need to qualify for Community Group 2.
- 3.7 The Court issued its judgement on 23 January 2009 and found in favour of Mr Alam. The judge stated that although the practice of the Council was not unlawful, the Lettings Policy did not reflect the practice. Therefore on the present wording of the Lettings Policy (as above):
- " the Borough's Lettings Policy requires, in compliance with s167 (2) (a) those who are assessed by the Council as homeless under the Housing Act Part 7 to be allocated to Community Group 2 whether or not the Borough owes them a duty of any kind under Part 7. The Claimant, who was and is such a person, was wrongly allocated to Community Group 3 and the Borough was in error to that extent."*
- 3.8 There is a risk that the judgement means that in addition to having to place Mr Alam in Community Group 2, in future *"all homeless persons are to be*

placed into Community Group 2..... There is simply no provision in the policy itself for placing any homeless person in Community Group 3.”

3.9 Previously applicants assessed as homeless but not in priority need have been placed in Community Group 3. Unless the existing Lettings Policy is amended, the Council could be faced with a significant increase in the numbers in Community Group 2, that will place even further pressure on the limited housing resources available.

3.10 The Council has appealed against the judgement and Counsel has advised that the Lettings Policy should be amended. Although a full review of the Allocations Scheme is underway, a revised scheme will not come to Cabinet for decision until later in the year. Pending the outcome of the appeal and the conclusions of the full review it is proposed that in relation to homeless cases, the existing scheme is amended as follows: -

3.11 Community Group 2 to be amended:

From: “those assessed by the Council as homeless under the Housing Act 1996 part 7 and other homeless households who have an assessed priority need”

To: “to include persons who are statutorily homeless and who have an assessed priority need and are accepted as unintentionally homeless.”

3.12 Community Group 3 to be amended

From: “this group includes applications from all others on the housing list whose applications are not included in groups 1,2 or 4”,

To: “ to include persons who are statutorily homeless and who do not have an assessed priority need, and all other housing applicants who do not fall within groups 1,2 or 4”.

3.13 Paragraph 2.3. Of the scheme to be amended:

From: “Group 3 If you are not included in any of these other groups, your application will normally be placed in Group 3.”

To: “Group 3 If you are not included in any of these other groups or have been assessed as homeless but are not in priority need, your application will normally be placed in Group 3”.

3.14 These amendments will ensure that the wording of the Lettings Policy is fully in line with existing practice. These amendments will not alter or reduce the service that has been provided for some time for homeless applicants who are not in priority need. The amendments will simply ensure that the wording of the Lettings Policy is clear and transparent and in line with existing practice.

- 3.15 Before altering an existing Lettings Policy, the Council has a statutory duty to inform partner RSL's of the proposed alteration and give them reasonable opportunity to comment. All members of the Common Housing Register Forum including RSL partners were formally written to setting out the proposed amendments to the Lettings Policy and invited to comment. The proposed amendments were further considered at a full meeting of the Forum on 3 March 2009 where RSL partners were given a further opportunity to comment upon the proposed amendments. There were no objections or concerns raised in relation to the proposed amendments to the Lettings Policy. A concern was expressed that the Lettings Policy needed to ensure it gave reasonable preference to non priority homeless cases but it was agreed that this was a matter for the full review of the Lettings Policy currently under way with a report due to go to Cabinet later in the year.

4 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 4.1 The report seeks agreement to a number of amendments to the current published Lettings Policy of the Council to mitigate the potential impacts, both in terms of finance and service delivery, of the decision of the High Court with regard to the case outlined.

5 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

- 5.1 Cabinet is asked to authorise changes to the Council's existing Lettings Policy following the outcome of the Judicial Review hearing in the case of R (X) v London Borough of Tower Hamlets (judgment reference [2009] EWHC 44 (Admin)).
- 5.2 The Council is required by section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have a scheme for determining priorities and the procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. The Council is required to allocate housing in accordance with the allocation scheme. The Lettings Policy serves the function of an allocation scheme in Tower Hamlets.
- 5.3 The Council has been following the lawful practice of allocating applicants assessed as homeless but not in priority need to Community Group 3 under the Lettings Policy. Unfortunately, the decision of the court in the case referred to above is that the correct construction of the Lettings Policy in its current wording is that such applicants should be placed in Community Group 2. This would be an unintended consequence, inconsistent with the Council's practice, and lead to the inconvenient consequences addressed in the report.
- 5.4 Before making an alteration to the Lettings Policy reflecting a major change in policy, the Council is required by section 167(7) of the Housing Act 1996 to carry out the following consultation –
- (a) send a copy of the proposed alteration, to every registered landlord with which the Council has nomination arrangements; and

- (b) afford those people a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposals.

5.5 The expression “major change in policy” is undefined in the Housing Act 1996. There is relevant guidance which suggests that a major change would include any amendment that affects the relative priority of a large number of people being considered, and a significant alteration to procedures. By reference to the construction that the Court has given to the Lettings Policy, it is best to consider the proposed amendments as a major change, even though they really just bring the Lettings Policy into line with what has always been the Council’s practice.

5.6 The code of guidance for local housing authorities on allocation of accommodation contains the Secretary of State’s view that, in addition to the mandatory statutory consultation referred to above, housing authorities should consult social services departments, health authorities, supporting people teams, connexions partnerships, relevant voluntary sector organisations and other recognised referral bodies. The guidance recommends a minimum consultation period of 12 weeks. It has not been possible to comply fully with these recommendations. However, the consultation that has been conducted complies with the statutory requirements and is considered adequate in circumstances where the Council needs to respond as rapidly as possible to the judgment referred to above and bring the Lettings Policy in line with existing practice. The Lettings Policy (which will include these proposed changes) will be the subject of a review in July 2009 that will comply fully with the consultation recommendations contained within the code of guidance.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The judgement means that unless the Lettings Policy is amended, the Council can no longer place homeless applicants who are not in priority need, or other applicants for housing who meet the criteria for homelessness, in Community Group 3 but must place them in Community Group 2. This will be a significant change from the practice adopted since the inception of the Lettings Policy in 2002.

6.2 Placing these applicants in Community Group 2 will give them significantly higher priority for a limited supply of housing and raise expectations that are unlikely to be met unless higher priority and more vulnerable applicants are displaced. This risks undermining the Council’s management of the limited supply of social housing and damage to the Council’s reputation by raising unrealistic expectations.

7 ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

There are no anti-poverty implications.

8 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

The changes recommended to the Lettings Policy will bring the wording of the policy into line with the status quo in relation to homeless applicants who are not in priority need. Although there is no indication that the recommendations to amend the Lettings Policy have any specific equal opportunities implications, a full equalities impact assessment will be carried out on the Lettings Policy as part of the planned review of the policy. The outcome will be reported to Cabinet later in the year.

9 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

None

10 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

Implementing the changes to the practice of placing homeless applicants who are not in priority need required by the judgement will place considerable additional administrative and customer contact demands on housing officers to no real purpose expect to manage unrealistic expectations and meet information needs that will potentially be required. This will impair efficiency and the effective delivery of the lettings service.

Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 97)
List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this Report

Tower Hamlets Lettings Policy
1996 Housing Act
High Court judgement Raihan Alam – v – London Borough of Tower, Hamlets 23 January 2009 (reference [2009] EWHC 44 (Admin))

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Agenda Item 6.2

Committee Cabinet	Date 8 April 2009	Classification Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 139/089	Agenda No:
Report of: Aman Dalvi Corporate Director Development & Renewal Author: Jackie Odunoye Service Head Strategy, Regeneration and Sustainability		Title: Local Authority Carbon Management Programme Wards affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Council has joined the sixth round of the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme which was launched in June 2008. The aims of this Programme are:

- To reduce CO₂ emissions.
- To reduce energy costs and improve energy efficiency.
- To show credible leadership in the community with regards to Climate Change mitigation

1.2 This report asks Cabinet to agree to the attached Carbon Management Plan which proposes that the Council commits to reducing CO₂ emissions from its own operations by 60% from the 2007 baseline by 2020.

Cabinet is recommended to:

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Approve the Carbon Management Plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

2.2 Agree the following targets for reducing carbon emissions from Council operations as outlined in the Carbon Management Plan:-

- 25% by 2012
- 40% by 2016
- 60% by 2020

2.3 Agree that a corporate framework be developed to verify, achieve and maintain carbon reduction targets over the longer term within the Authority's Strategic Plan

- 2.4 Agree that the Authority's Capital Strategy be revised to include the aim of 'Reducing the Council's carbon footprint and assisting the community to do likewise'.
- 2.5 Agree that all new capital scheme funding applications include a Carbon Impact Assessment.
- 2.6 Instruct the Corporate Director Development and Renewal to review the Asset Management Plan (AMP) to assess the forward 'Carbon Reduction Commitment' risks being created by schemes already agreed within the capital programme, in the context of the Asset Management Plan's ability to deliver savings and cost reductions over the medium term.
- 2.7 Note that the target carbon reductions included in the Carbon Management Plan and the implementation of the projects detailed in the plan are essential to the achievement of the following National Indicators:
- NI185 %C CO₂ reduction from LA operations
 - NI186 Per capita CO₂ emissions in the LA area
- 2.8 Note the introduction of the Carbon Reduction Commitment from 2010/2011 onwards and the potential financial penalties for not reducing carbon emissions.

3. LOCAL AUTHORITY CARBON MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

- 3.1 To reduce corporate operational carbon emissions the Council joined the sixth round of the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (LACMP), launched in June 2008. A Board is in place to steer the project, along with a Team involving representatives from all Directorates.
- 3.2 A Carbon Management Plan has now been produced and this is attached at Appendix 1. The Plan sets out a number of reasons why it is essential that the Council puts in place projects and systems that will reduce its carbon emissions:
- As a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration the Council committed itself to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate in the borough
 - The introduction of the Carbon Reduction Commitment in 2010 will mean that poorly performing authorities (i.e. those that do not reduce their carbon emissions) will be penalised dependant on their position in a league table
 - There are two national indicators specific to CO₂ reduction
 - Measures to increase energy efficiency will reduce energy costs, which have been rising dramatically
 - Taking action to combat climate change will have a positive impact on an organisation's reputation and there is evidence to suggest it also improves staff morale

- It is part of a wider strategy to reduce its use of natural resources and its impact on the environment
 - Sustainability will form a core part of the CAA
 - The July 2008 CPA assessment included giving greater priority to environmental sustainability as an 'Area for Improvement'
- 3.3. It is recommended that in adopting this Plan Cabinet also agrees to adopt the following target reductions against the 2007 carbon baseline of 42,853 tonnes CO₂ per annum.
- 25% by 2012
 - 40% by 2016
 - 60% by 2020
- 3.4 The Carbon Management Plan lists in section 4, a number of projects which have already been identified which will contribute to this target; this shows that almost 14% reduction on the baseline has already been identified provided the projects listed are implemented. The Carbon Trust advises that this is a reasonable number of projects to have started at this stage. Further projects will be identified and implemented as the work proceeds.
- 3.5 A Value at Stake assessment has been undertaken that suggests around £4 million cumulative cost avoidance if energy saving projects can achieve the 25% reduction by 2012. However, this is entirely dependant on the projects identified being funded, implemented and where relevant embedded into Council practice. A number of carbon reduction projects already have funding in place - some of which have already completed (section 4.1 of Carbon Management Plan).
- 3.6 The annual estimated cost avoidance of the 19 projects is not yet determined. This is because many of the projects need to be quantified further. Together they represent an annual 5,914 tCO₂ emission reduction from 2012. This contributes 13.6% of the '25% by 2012' target, leaving a further 4,800tC to be delivered over the next four years. Whilst this target appears difficult to achieve, the revenue effect of capital schemes completed in the past few years at schools and other premises, together with the gains from the BSF schemes completing by 2012, will provide a significant part of this total.
- 3.7 Over the medium term more CO₂ reduction will emerge from review of the Asset Management Plan (AMP), regeneration of housing estates and the Building Schools for the Future programme. The potential annual revenue cost avoidance in excess of £1.4 million identified in the project has built in some assumptions of future increases in consumption but not factored in the impact of energy price rises going forward. The % year on year increase in energy consumption coupled with the ongoing rise in energy prices is putting a strain on the Councils revenue budgets which needs to be managed downwards

3.8 Achieving the carbon reduction targets recommended in the Plan is also essential to the achievement of two National Indicators:

- NI186 Per capita CO₂ emissions in the LA area
- NI 185 Percentage CO₂ reduction from LA operations

It also contributes to NI 194 (air quality) and NI 187 (fuel poverty)

3.9 In order to ensure that further projects are identified, costed, justified and implemented a corporate framework will be developed to verify, achieve and maintain carbon reduction targets over the longer term within the strategic planning process. Governance arrangements will be developed which consider the business case for each project, and ensure that investment in energy reduction projects derives optimum carbon, financial and promotional outputs from the carbon reduction agenda.

3.10 Meanwhile, it is important that the Council takes every opportunity to embed carbon reduction into management thinking, both to reduce energy costs and to minimise the Council's carbon impact. In this regard, it is recommended that the Capital Strategy be amended to include the aim of *'Reducing the Council's carbon footprint and assisting the community to do likewise'*. Cabinet is asked to agree to add a Carbon Impact Assessment into the capital programme review process, with a requirement that all new funding applications include a Carbon Impact Assessment that is auditable.

3.11 Both the Asset Management Plan and the Revenue Implications Assessment of the 2008-09 Capital Programme need to be re-visited to assess the forward risks being created, in the context of the AMP's ability to deliver savings over the medium term, where opportunities exist to offset emissions growth through further efficiency measures. Programme managers are already able to source additional funds:-

- The Prudential Code may be well suited to support longer paybacks on carbon reduction capital expenditure.
- It is possible to lever-in match funding from the Carbon Trust via Salix, typically around £250,000.
- In the social housing sector there are grant funds available from the CERT and Low Carbon Buildings Programmes, each representing good leverage from housing investment budgets, which in turn will improve Tower Hamlets Homes performance on its Use of Resources assessment.

3.12 Manager training needs are being evaluated, with a view to providing additional support on carbon budgeting for service planning, in order to embed carbon management across the Council.

4. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT

4.1 The Carbon Reduction Commitment is a statutory obligation which covers all mains gas and grid electricity consumption from the Council's direct or

contracted-out¹ operation of its functions. State-funded schools are included and will have a new duty placed on them to supply their Local Authority with annual energy use data.

- 4.2 The Council will need to register its total 2008 half-hourly electricity consumption in December 2009 as part of the Baseline Survey, monitor all its energy use between October 2009-March 2010 as part of the Baseline monitoring phase and report actual energy use at the end of each financial year, commencing July 2010. The Council will need to purchase allowances to cover its carbon emissions from April 2010, the first sale of allowances taking place in April 2011. Subsequent allowance sales will be open for one month (each April), when sufficient allowances must be secured for the forthcoming year's energy use.
- 4.3 The Carbon Reduction Commitment will be rolled out in two phases: Phase 1 covers the period 2010–2013 with CO₂ priced uniformly at £12 per tonne. Monies raised from carbon allowance sales within the Carbon Reduction Commitment process are recycled back to Carbon Reduction Commitment participants on the basis of their position in a 'league table'
- 4.4 Phase 2 will run for 5 years between 2013/14 and 2017/18 - the price of carbon allowances will vary each year, on the basis of a sealed bids auction, and there will be a cap on the total amount of allowances available. For the first year of Phase 2 (2013/14) the cap will be set on the baseline of the Council's 2011/12 emissions. Thereafter the caps will be set on a reducing trend, assisting the national target of saving 1.2mtC p.a. by 2020.
- 4.5 Based on the latest available year's data (2007) the total CO₂ emissions from mains gas and grid electricity were 32,441tC. Assuming these were the Year 1 emissions for Carbon Reduction Commitment, the cost of 2010/11 allowances would be £389,292. This cost will only be fully recoverable if the Council can hit the median point in the league table. Realistically it is possible that a penalty of up to 10% might be payable, and as energy usage increased by 9% between 2006/07 and 2007/08, and this upward trend continued through 2008 this would produce a 'cost at risk' in Year 1 of up to £50,000. This is the 'best case' scenario.
- 4.6 From year 2 onwards the initial position in the league table will be determined by whether the Council's energy usage has increased or decreased from the previous year. Penalties for poor performance will become progressively higher, adding further impetus to the drive to reduce energy consumption.
- 4.7 In addition there will be registration costs and 'fines' if the Council does not keep the mandatory information pack up to date or does not submit the statutory returns on time. The following table illustrates the potential costs to the Council:

¹ Where the Council is a party to the Contractor's energy supply contract.

Summary for the First Three Years of the Scheme

Year of Scheme	Best Case Scenario £'000	Worst Case Scenario £'000
Registration	-	105
Year 1 (2009/10)	(38)	405
Year 2 (2010/11)	(269)	700
Year 3 (2011/12)	(403)	834

4.8 The costs shown in the above table are all additional to the costs of the energy consumed. Therefore the total potential cost avoidance if the 25% CO₂ emission reduction by 2012 is achieved may be in excess of £1million per year.

5 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

5.1. The financial consequences of carbon management relate to;

- The costs of implementation of carbon management schemes. The cost of achieving the recommended targets proposed in this report (para 2.2) are not identified in the report, but could be considerable.
- The risk of incurring costs under the Carbon Trading Scheme (CRC) as set out in section 4 above. It should be noted that the figures are indicative figures only and could be higher or lower than described in this report.

5.2. The Carbon Management Programme contains proposals for a number of carbon management schemes and indicates draft financial implications. These implications continue to be revised as the Programme develops. At this stage it appears more likely that initial schemes will not deliver financial savings that support the medium term financial strategy. All projects must adhere to strict invest to save criteria being developed as part of the Carbon Management programme and subject to CFO approval.

5.3. Funding for the Carbon Trading Programme would need to come from a number of sources, including the Capital Programme and Revenue growth. Identification of funding would need to take the form of either revenue or capital growth bids in future budget rounds. It is possible that some projects may qualify as invest to save projects that could be sponsored and delivered through the Council's Efficiency Programme. Accordingly a robust financial business case would need to be developed for each of these proposals on a case by case basis.

5.4. The Carbon Trading Scheme involves potential costs from;

- Fines as a result of failure to comply with elements of the scheme. It is not anticipated that the authority will fall foul of any of these provisions.
- Penalties incurred by the authority's position in the carbon trading 'league table'. It is important to realise that it is the authority's performance relative to other organisations that will determine these payments, so it is possible (if not likely) that the authority would incur costs even if it reduces its carbon usage.
- Any costs incurred in the early years of the scheme will therefore need to be met from existing budgets or from reserves. A report to Members would be submitted at the appropriate time.

5.5 The costs of administration of the Carbon Trading Scheme and the management of the programme will need to be met within existing resources.

6 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

6.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the Carbon Management Plan in Appendix 1, adopt specified targets for carbon emissions and agree to development of a corporate framework for addressing the targets within the strategic plan.

6.2 The Council has power to pursue action on climate change. The Council may do anything which it considers likely to achieve promotion of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or any part of Tower Hamlets or all or any people resident or present in Tower Hamlets. In determining how to exercise this power, the Council must have regard to its sustainable community strategy.

6.3 The Community Plan makes improving the environment and tackling climate change a priority as part of the theme of A Great Place to Live. The Community Plan specifically states that this priority will be achieved by specified means, including: reducing energy use and using more renewable energy sources. The strategic plan sets out the Council's contribution to achieving the Community Plan.

6.4 It is open for Cabinet to conclude that there is power to make the requested decisions.

7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Implementing the Carbon Management Plan will positively contribute to the One Tower Hamlets objectives of ensuring strong community cohesion and strengthening community leadership.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Implementing the Carbon Management Plan will have a number of beneficial outcomes for the Council, including substantial potential cost avoidance and the ability to achieve two national indicators as well as enhancing its' reputation as an organisation which takes climate change seriously.
- 8.2 However, these outcomes will only be achieved if the projects included within the plan, are funded, implemented and embedded into Council practice. These projects will therefore need to be carefully monitored via the Asset & Capital Management Board.

9 ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Projects which reduce energy consumption and thus cost in the communal areas of the Council's housing stock will help keep service charges to tenants and leaseholders at a reasonable level.

10 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications to this report

11 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 11.1 Climate change is already damaging the world's ecosystems and if we are to avoid its worst effects we have to stay below a 2⁰ C increase in average global temperatures, compared to what they were before the industrial era. The government has placed emphasis on local authorities setting a leading example on climate change.
- 11.2 Actions by local authorities will be critical to the achievement of the government's climate change objectives such as the long term goal to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. This report sets out the Council's response to this challenging agenda, in as far as carbon emissions from its own operations are concerned. As such it sets out a programme of actions which when implemented will have a positive impact on the local environment and will contribute to the wider climate change agenda.

12 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 12.1 Energy costs continue to rise and the Council's use of energy has also risen by 9% between 2006/07 and 2007/08. Implementation of the projects included in the Carbon Management Plan will reverse this trend of ever increasing energy usage and therefore avoid a proportion of the energy costs which the Council would otherwise have incurred.

13 APPENDIX

London Borough Tower Hamlets Carbon Management Programme

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this Report

Tower Hamlets Community Plan, 2020 Vision

Tower Hamlets Procurement Policy

Climate Change Act

Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change

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London Borough Tower Hamlets Carbon Management Programme

Carbon Management Plan (CMP)

Image for front page to be confirmed.

Date: 23rd March 2009

Owner: Rachel Carless

Status: Draft

Approval route:

- LACM Board - 4th Feb
- Submission draft report - 17th Feb
- Final report - 23rd March
- Cabinet - 8th April.

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Foreword from the Chief Executive and Lead Member for Resources

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing the planet today. In 2007 the Council demonstrated its commitment to tackling climate change by signing the Nottingham Declaration¹. This Carbon Management plan is further evidence that as an organisation we are serious about our responsibilities and it represents an important building block in what will become an overarching Climate Change Strategy for the Borough.

Carbon management is important to the Council as it not only helps to combat climate change but reduces the Council's costs allowing it to operate in an efficient way, thereby embracing the principles of value for money for the Borough's residents. This Carbon Management Plan reinforces the priorities outlined in the Community Plan to protect the environment, tackle climate change and secure sustainable development for the future.

The Council has two roles to play in this - firstly by addressing its own impacts as a major organisation and consumer of resources and secondly as a community leader by raising awareness and encouraging and co-ordinating action across communities and organisations.

As a community leader the Council should lead by example, setting the standard for other local organisations to follow. It is essential that the Council's efforts to manage its carbon emissions are seen as part of effective resource and asset management for the Council, and as such are considered by all of those who have an impact on it.

Xxxxxxx

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Signed by Martin Smith and Cllr Joshua Peck

¹ The Nottingham Declaration recognises the central role of local authorities in leading society's response to the challenge of climate change. More info at <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/nottingham/Nottingham-Declaration/Why-Sign/About-the-Nottingham-Declaration>

Foreword from the Carbon Trust

Cutting carbon emissions as part of the fight against climate change should be a key priority for local authorities - it's all about getting your own house in order and leading by example. The UK government has identified the local authority sector as key to delivering Carbon Reduction across the UK in line with its Kyoto commitments and the Local Authority Carbon Management programme is designed in response to this. It assists councils in saving money on energy and putting it to good use in other areas, whilst making a positive contribution to the environment by lowering their carbon emissions.

Tower Hamlets Council was selected in 2008, amidst strong competition, to take part in this ambitious programme. Tower Hamlets Council partnered with the Carbon Trust on this programme in order to realise vast carbon and cost savings. This Carbon Management Plan commits the council to a target of reducing CO₂ by 30% by 2012 and underpins potential cumulative financial savings to the council of around £4.7 million to 2012.

There are those that can and those that do. Local authorities can contribute significantly to reducing CO₂ emissions. The Carbon Trust is very proud to support Tower Hamlets Council in their ongoing implementation of carbon management.



Richard Rugg, Head of Public Sector, Carbon Trust



Management Summary

Tackling climate change is now a core policy driver at both local and national government level. From 2009 all councils will be assessed by government, through the Comprehensive Area Assessment, on their ability to work together with local public and private partners to reduce their energy consumption both within and beyond organisational boundaries while also adapting services to the expected changes climate change will bring.

This Carbon Management Plan sets out the ambition around becoming a low carbon Council and details its first steps, over an initial three year programme of investment. The council's carbon baseline in year ending April 2008 was 42,853 tCO₂ (tonnes CO₂) with associated energy costs of £3.4 million.

The total (non cashable) savings that will be gained through fulfilling the 25% reduction target by 2012 (the Cumulative Value At Stake) is around £4 million. The cost to achieve the 25% reduction is still being determined. So far nineteen Carbon Reduction projects have been identified that represent 13.8% of the reduction target. Fourteen of these projects are already quantified, the cost for implementation is around £3.7 million.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets will reduce CO₂ emissions from Council Operations by 60% by 2020 (from 2007 levels)

Figure 1 – Breakdown of emissions by sector

Note: Housing in this pie chart refers to the authority's Landlord supplies for the housing stock managed by Tower Hamlets Homes, not housing emissions themselves.

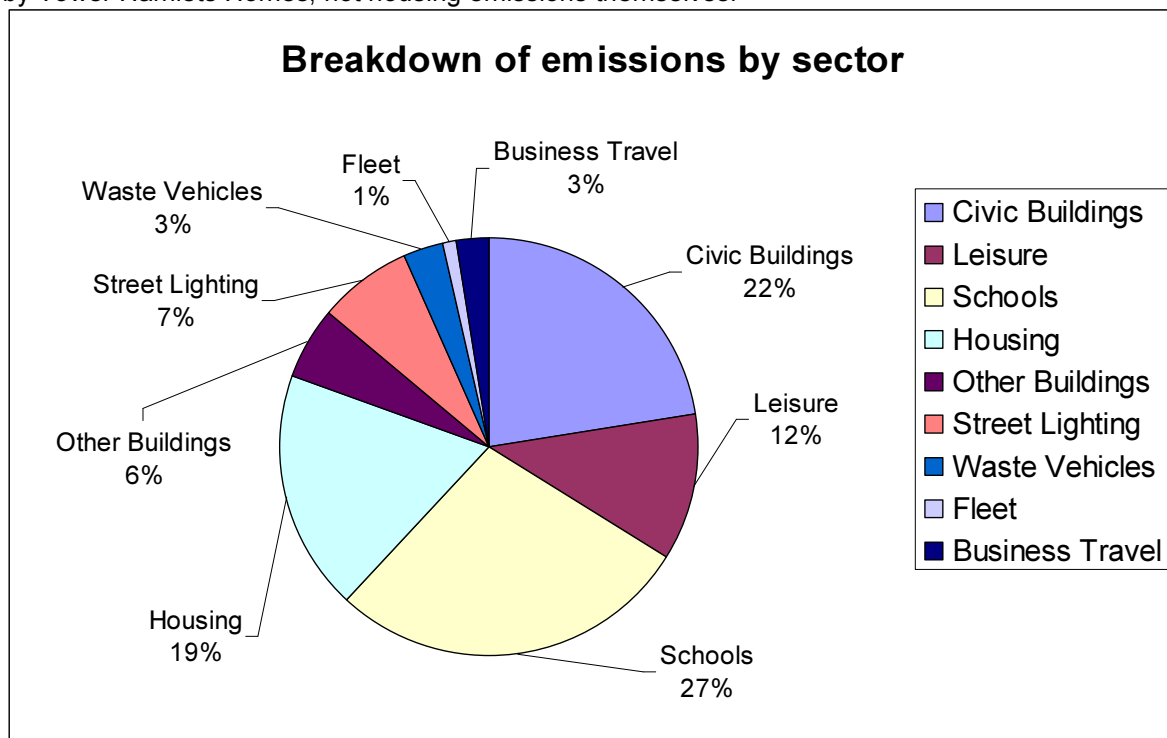
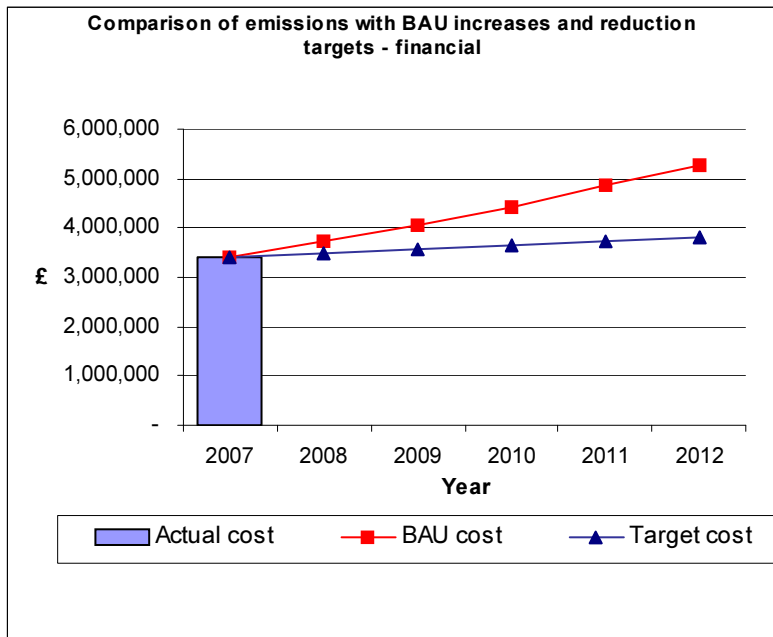


Figure 2 – Financial Value At Stake



BAU = Business As Usual. BAU is the scenario if no action is taken to reduce carbon emissions. The BAU in this case is that the council’s energy costs will rise by around £1.9 million (from £3.4 million to £5.3 million) per annum by 2012. This takes into account future utility prices and increased consumption.

The Cumulative Financial Value At Stake (VAS) is the difference between the business as usual (BAU) scenario and the reduced emissions scenario and is represented by the triangular space between the red and blue lines on the graph. The Cumulative VAS (non cashable savings) is around £4 million if the council hits the 25% reduction target by 2012. (This does not take into account the cost of implementing the projects).

Figure 3 – Carbon Value At Stake

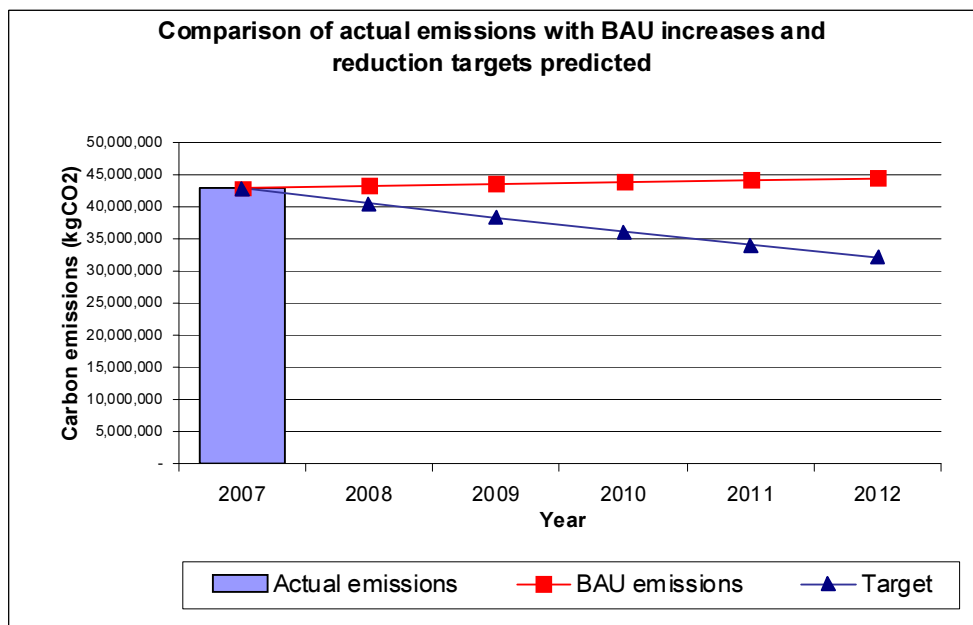


Figure 3 – Carbon Value At Stake (above)

Figure 3 demonstrates the Business As Usual (BAU) scenario whereby if no action is taken the Council’s carbon footprint will increase by 1,521 tCO₂ to 44,374 tCO₂ per annum by 2012.

Figure 4

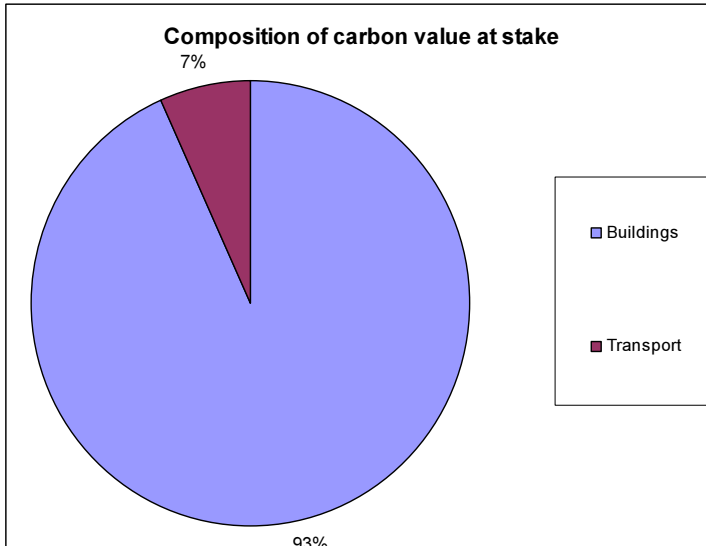


Figure 5

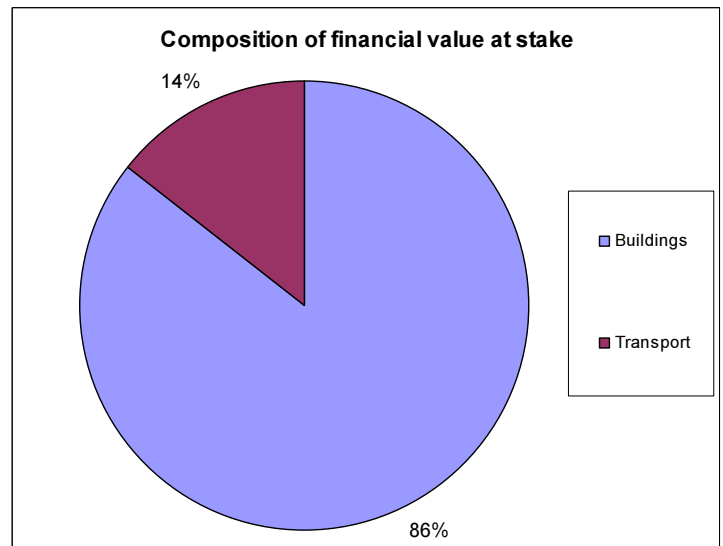


Figure 4 - Composition of Carbon Value At Stake

Figure 4 shows where the biggest carbon savings can be made. It shows that 93% of the Value At Stake lies in stationary sources or the Council’s buildings. This demonstrates the importance of ensuring that the Council’s buildings are the focus of the council’s Carbon Management Programme.

Figure 5 - Composition of Financial Value At Stake

This pie chart shows that 86% of the non-cashable savings are to be found in Carbon Reduction projects associated with the council’s buildings.

So far nineteen projects have been identified within the Carbon Management Programme, which together will save an estimated 5914 tonnes CO₂. This represents 13.8% of the reduction target. As the Programme progresses more carbon saving projects will need to be identified.

A key challenge will be to maintain the Programme’s impetus, momentum and sufficient investment over time. In order to ensure success a dedicated ring fenced fund will need to be established in order to finance projects over the course of the Programme. In addition the authority shall need to ensure there is full ‘buy in’ from Tower Hamlets Homes and schools.

Salix Finance, a subsidiary company of the Carbon Trust, set up to fund public sector energy efficiency projects, will be utilised to provide 50% match funding for the

Programme's capital projects, where the projects offer cashable savings, the funding shall be utilised to fund 100% of school schemes where possible.

The Council will achieve the aims set out in this Carbon Management Plan through activity in 5 key areas;

1. Implementing Carbon Reduction projects
2. Making Carbon Reduction everyone's responsibility
3. Targeting budgets to Carbon Reduction projects and seeking new external funds
4. Creating strong leadership and ownership of Carbon Management within the Council
5. More effective partnership working

(These are explored in further detail in Section 2.3 of this Plan).

Policy Framework

Community Plan 2020

Tower Hamlets new Community Plan, 2020 Vision, recognises both the challenge, and importance of reducing CO₂ emissions and ensuring sustainable development across the Borough. A key target of the Community Plan is that; by March 2011 we will reduce the level of CO₂ emissions in the borough by 10%.

Carbon Reduction is a recurring tenant throughout the Community Plan; it is reflected throughout all of the themes; a Great Place to Live, A Prosperous Community, A Safe and Supporting Community and a Healthy Community. This acknowledges that Carbon Reduction must be embedded in all Partnership activities if we are to lead in tackling climate change.

This Carbon Management Plan sits within the Community Plan theme of a Great Place to Live, where one of the four priorities is;

Improving the environment and tackling climate change by: Reducing energy use and using more renewable energy sources

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The LDF has been developed and produced in line with our Community Plan 2020, it sets out the spatial strategy for the Borough for the next 15 years, giving geographic expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society. Tackling Climate Change is a key theme in the Core Strategy document (currently out to consultation). The following key aims are set out under this theme;

- Work towards zero carbon built form
- Encourage renewable energy within the Borough and linked into a wider network for East London
- Ensure that all new homes reach zero carbon by 2016 and that all non-domestic properties reach zero-carbon by 2019
- Achieve a zero carbon borough in the current century, with a 60% reduction by 2025

Other Plans

Local Area Agreement

The partnerships commitment to Carbon Reduction is also expressed in the council's Local Area Agreement (LAA). The outcomes in the LAA have been developed in line with the Community Plan, and identified and agreed through the Tower Hamlets Partnership, involving all key local partners and stakeholders. Through the "Golden Thread" approach, our commitment to Carbon Reduction is reflected through the annual Strategic Plan (Community Plan Implementation Plan) and the business planning process.

Procurement Sustainability Policy

As part of the council's procurement policy, sustainability, environmental and social factors must be considered in all purchase, tender, contract and contract management activity. The policy involves consideration of the following;

- What the product is made from
- Whether the product can be reused/re-cycled at the end of its life
- The processes involved in its production and distribution
- Possibility of purchasing and consuming less

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Carbon Management Plan is to establish a comprehensive process for managing carbon emissions by the Council. The primary focus of the work is to reduce emissions under the control of the local authority such as buildings, transportation (fleet and staff travel) and street lighting. The Programme will also result in increased operational efficiency and cost savings. The Plan outlines the Council's vision and Carbon Reduction targets up to 2020.

The Carbon Trust Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) Programme is a ten month, 5 step process that began at a launch event hosted by the Carbon Trust in May 2008. The Programme was launched internally on June 18th 2008. Since then the Council has been working through the 5 steps;

- Mobilise the organisation
- Set baseline, forecast and targets
- Identify and quantify options
- Finalise Carbon Management Plan
- Implement Carbon Management Plan

This Plan will come into effect in April 2009, following successful adoption by Cabinet and covers the first three years of the Implementation Phase of the Carbon Management Programme (to March 2012).

This Plan builds on previous work undertaken by the Council to address its environmental impacts. The Council's Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2010) were adopted by Cabinet in June 2007 setting out the vision for improving the environmental performance of the council in five key areas of significant and direct environmental impact; Transport, Energy management, Water management, Waste management and Procurement.

Leading on from this Carbon Management Plan, work will be undertaken to produce an overarching Climate Change Strategy that will address the causes and impacts of climate change, according to our local priorities, securing maximum benefit for our communities. This is also a requirement for the Council as a signatory of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.¹

¹ The Nottingham Declaration recognises the central role of local authorities in leading society's response to the challenge of climate change. More information can be found at <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/nottingham/Nottingham-Declaration/Why-Sign/About-the-Nottingham-Declaration>

2. Carbon Management Strategy

This section sets the Carbon Management Plan in the wider context – international through to local drivers. It will outline what the Authority is aiming for and the key areas of activity that will be undertaken to get there.

2.1 Context and Drivers for Carbon Management

Climate change is already damaging the world's ecosystems. Left unchecked, it is set to cause a global humanitarian and environmental disaster affecting species, habitats and people everywhere. If we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change (and to avoid dangerous tipping points) we have to stay below a 2°C increase in average global temperatures, compared to what they were before the industrial era.

Nottingham Declaration:

The council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in 2007:

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate on our borough

The UK Government has placed an emphasis on local authorities setting a leading example on Climate Change. Action by local authorities will be critical to the achievement of the Government's climate change objectives such as the long-term goal to reduce CO₂ emissions by (the recently raised target of) 80% by 2050 (on 1990 levels) in the Climate Change Bill. This has created a number of legislative drivers for Local Authorities:

- **Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC):**

The Carbon Reduction Commitment² is a mandatory “cap & trade” emissions trading scheme for organisations (in public and private sectors) whose total electricity consumption is greater than 6,000MWh or approximately £500k. If an organisation falls within the CRC scheme all electricity and fuel emissions are covered. From 2010 poorly performing Local Authorities will be penalised depending on their position in a CRC league table when compared with other members of the scheme. An analysis has been undertaken on what the financial implications of the scheme might be, taking into account the “cap and trade” element and the potential penalties which may be incurred. This is summarised in the table below.

² More info on the CRC can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/Environment/climatechange/uk/business/crc/index.htm>

Table 1 - Summary for the First Three Years of the CRC Scheme:

Year of Scheme	Best Case Scenario £'000	Worst Case Scenario £'000
Registration	-	105
Year 1 (2010/2011)	(38)	405
Year 2 (2011/2012)	(269)	700
Year 3 (2012/2013)	(403)	834

Defra have also created two National Indicators specific to CO₂ reduction:

• **NI185 – Percentage CO₂ reduction from LA operations**

The public sector is in a key position to lead on efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions by setting a behavioural and strategic example to the private sector and the communities they serve. Measurement against this indicator requires each local authority to calculate its CO₂ emissions from analysis of the energy and fuel use in their relevant buildings and transport, including where these services have been outsourced.³

Tower Hamlets is using the work in this Programme to effect the reductions required by this National Indicator, and will report to Defra annually on performance.

• **NI186 – Per capita CO₂ reduction of emissions in the LA area:**

Government estimates that in 2006 some 2,348,000 tonnes of CO₂ were emitted in Tower Hamlets - just over 11 tonnes per head - the second highest emitting Borough in London. Most of this comes from the commercial and industrial sector (65%), with 18% from housing and 17% from transport.

The Council has included NI 186 as a committed target within its LAA - one of the 35 National Indicators selected from the National set. The Council has committed to the following CO₂ reduction targets in per capita carbon emissions. The percentage reduction in CO₂ per capita in each LA will be reported to DCLG annually:

- 3% by the end of 2008
- 6% by 2009
- 10% by 2010

³ More information on NI185 and NI186 can be found at: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localgovindicators/indicators.htm

- **Cost**

Measures to increase energy efficiency will reduce energy costs, which is particularly important for the future given the predicted increases in energy prices. Energy and fuel costs have seen a dramatic rise in recent years, with energy prices increasing by well over 50% since 2004 and by as much as 80% in the last year alone (June 2007 to June 2008). The energy market is currently very volatile but we must accept that the price we pay for our energy is likely to increase in the coming years. Saving money on energy allows the Council to divert valuable funds elsewhere and to therefore tackle better the considerable challenges of inequality, poverty, health and education that exist in the Borough.

- **Reputation**

Climate change is a critical global issue which requires leadership. Taking action to combat climate change will increase public confidence and have an immensely positive impact on the organisation's reputation. There is also growing evidence that organisations that are active in addressing environmental impacts boast enhanced employee morale leading to higher productivity.

- **Reduce Use of Natural Resources**

The Council recognises its responsibility to manage its consumption of the world's natural resources and to work towards the principles of One Planet Living⁴ - that is to say to operate sustainably using the resources available. This Plan is an important part of the Council's commitment to reduce its own use of natural resources and its impact on the environment.

Other Drivers:

- **Display Energy Certificates**

From the 6th April 2008 it became a legal requirement for all public buildings with a usable floor area of over 1000 sq metres, to display the Display Energy Certificate (DEC) in a public place (normally the entrance).⁵ This certificate provides an asset rating and an operational rating and is only valid for 12 months for public buildings and authorities; it is a requirement to be updated annually. A programme of implementation is now in place to ensure compliance.

- **Performance against other National Indicators**

Achieving the Aims of the CMP and progress towards the reduction targets also benefits the Council's performance in several National Indicators. The per capita reduction of energy use within the Borough, NI 186, has already been mentioned. As a consequence of the Council using less gas the levels of atmospheric nitrogen oxides

⁴ More information can be found at www.oneplanetliving.org

⁵ More information on DEC can be found at www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/theenvironment/energyperformance/certificates/displayenergycertificates

and PM10s (particulate matter, a recognised air pollutant) reduce, directly assisting Air Quality, measured by NI 194, whilst improving the efficiency of communal heating helps residents avoid fuel poverty, measured by NI 187.

• CPA & CAA Assessment

The report from the Corporate Assessment element of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was published in July 2008. Overall this stated that the Council was performing strongly and enabled us to achieve a 4 star rating – the highest possible. One of the two recommendations for improvement was that the “the Council should ensure that it gives greater priority to environmental sustainability.”

From the 1st April 2009 the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is to replace the CPA. The Audit Commission have made it clear that sustainability will form a core part of the CAA. For example the Key Lines of Enquiry for the Use of Resources element of the CAA requires the Council to “Make effective use of natural resources”. Specifically within this we will be assessed against our ability to:

1. Understand and quantify our use of natural resources and identify the main influencing factors
2. Manage performance to reduce our impact on the environment
3. Manage the environmental risks we face, working with partners

2.2 Our Low Carbon Vision

**London Borough Tower Hamlets –
Reducing Carbon, Reducing Costs**

In order to achieve this, the council commits to the following;

- Reducing its carbon emissions year on year
- Reaching Level 5 in each area of the Carbon Management Embedding Matrix by April 2011 [See Appendix A of this Plan]

2.3 Key Areas of Activity

The Council has made a good start on embedding carbon management within the Council through changing existing policies and procedures, but there is still much to do to ensure carbon management receives due regard in all areas of the Council’s operations and becomes a true corporate priority.

As the Carbon Management Programme develops, the Council will need to consider more aspirational, larger investment projects in order to reach the higher Carbon Reduction targets it has set itself.

There are 5 key areas of activity that will move the Council towards its Low Carbon vision;

1. Implementing Carbon Reduction projects

See Projects Table in Section 4 of this Plan for further detail on the nineteen Carbon Reduction projects and ideas for further Carbon Reduction opportunities.

2. Making Carbon Reduction everyone's responsibility

Making Carbon Reduction everyone's responsibility means embedding carbon management throughout the Council and ensuring that the aims of the programme are aligned with and not working against the rest of the organisation's activities. This involves working across diverse areas such as policy, finance and investment, communications and training and data management. The main way the Council will do this is by implementing the Carbon Embedding Matrix [See Appendix A].

3. Targeting budgets to Carbon Reduction projects and seeking new external funds

The authority need to identify funding internally within existing resources and take full advantage of any external funding opportunities available to fund energy efficiency projects and schemes aimed at reducing carbon emissions and to reduce energy usage levels. This is further explored in section six.

4. Creating strong leadership and ownership of Carbon Management within the council

This will be achieved by embedding carbon management throughout the Council using the Embedding Matrix [See Appendix A]. This involves a wide range of activities including ensuring carbon management is integrated into responsibilities of senior managers, as well as activity in areas such as communications and training and data management.

5. Effective partnership working

Carbon Reduction by the Council cannot be achieved efficiently without full involvement and buy in from its partners. This is a Partnership issue of considerable importance and as such will be pursued within the partnership governance structure.

2.4 Targets and objectives

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets will reduce CO2 emissions from Council Operations by 60% by 2020 (from 2007 levels).

The Council has set Carbon Reduction targets (using 2007 as the baseline) as follows;

25% reduction by 2012

40% reduction by 2016

60% reduction by 2020

3 Emissions Baseline and Projections

3.1 Scope

This section outlines the current emissions and sets out what the Council hopes to achieve in terms of Carbon Reduction.

The scope of NI 185 is described as follows: "NI 185 is to include all CO₂ emissions from the delivery of Local Authority functions. In terms of the meaning of the word in legislation "function" covers both the duties and powers of an Authority. It covers all an Authority's own operations and outsourced services. Even if the services are being provided by an external body (e.g. a private company) they remain the function of the Authority".

Due to the challenges in collecting data, the scope of the Carbon Management Programme baseline is different to the one for NI 185. Work continues to finalise the NI 185 baseline, which will be more comprehensive than the LACM. The scope for the LACM baseline is as follows;

Stationary Sources:

- Council Offices (10 buildings)
- Community Centres (12 buildings)
- Idea stores (4 buildings)
- Libraries (5 buildings)
- Leisure centres (7 buildings) - These are managed by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL)
- Secondary schools (14 schools)
- Special schools (6 schools)
- Primary schools (63 Primary, 3 Junior, 3 Infants & 6 Nursery Schools)
- Housing (13 Blocks). This relates to electricity consumption for the landlords' areas and gas used by communal boilers. Emissions from housing itself is not included
- Street lighting and street furniture

Transport:

- Transport from Waste collection service (Veolia)
- Transport from Parks department services (Fountains)
- Council fleet
- Essential car user
- Casual car user

- Business transport including taxis

The council has not included the following emissions in its baseline;

- Social housing
- Transport related to procurement contracts
- Embedded carbon from goods procured
- CO₂ emissions from water usage
- Commuting (council staff traveling to and from work), emissions from staff working remotely and courier services
- Embedded emissions from Waste from Council buildings

It was decided not to include social housing because the council does not manage this sector itself. The Borough's social housing is managed by an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) – Tower Hamlets Homes (THH).

Procurement based emissions pose a significant challenge for any local authority carbon management programme due to the sheer volume of outsourced services the Council procures. Council Procurement staff are currently looking at how to address carbon emissions in this significant area and are developing a robust sustainable procurement strategy that will incorporate Carbon Reduction and accounting measures.

The Council has not included CO₂ emissions from water usage because it does not, as yet, have the full consumption figures. Work is being undertaken in this area and there are also targets around reducing water consumption in the council's Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2010).

3.2 Baseline

The baseline has been calculated to determine the carbon 'footprint' of the Council. This data allows the Council to understand and prioritise those areas where action is required and can be best achieved and also to measure progress in Carbon Reduction over the forthcoming years.

The baseline data is for the financial year ending 31st March 2008. This coincides with NI 185 reporting. The baseline uses the carbon factors outlined in the Annex of this Plan. [See Factors Benchmarking & References table]

Table 2 – Summary table of emissions for baseline year 2007/08:

	Total	Buildings and street lights	Transport
Baseline CO₂ emissions (tonnes)	42,870	40,025	2,845
Baseline Cost (£)	3,412,416	2,923,222	489,194

Figure 6: Summary of emissions for baseline year 2007/08

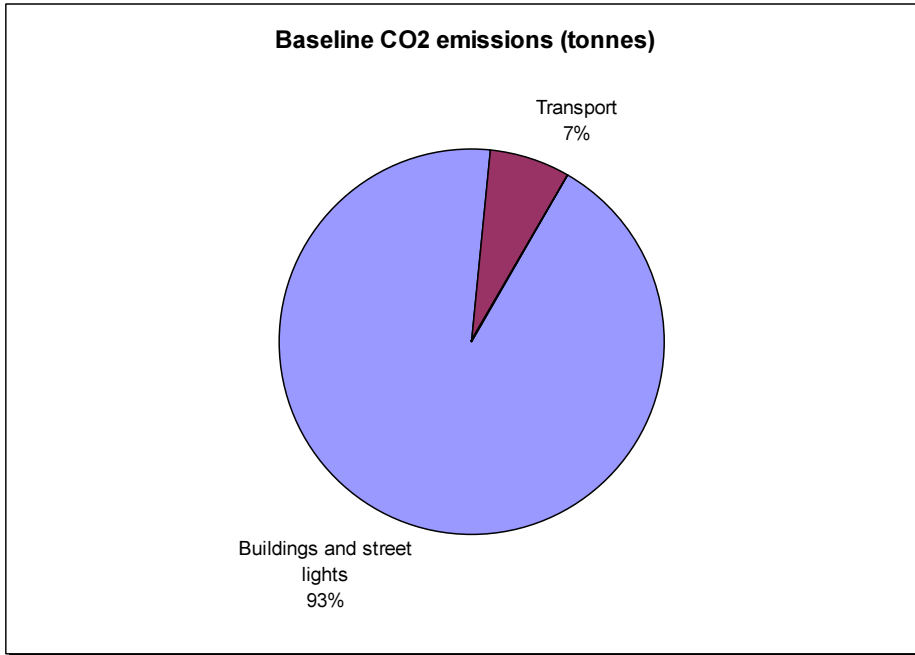
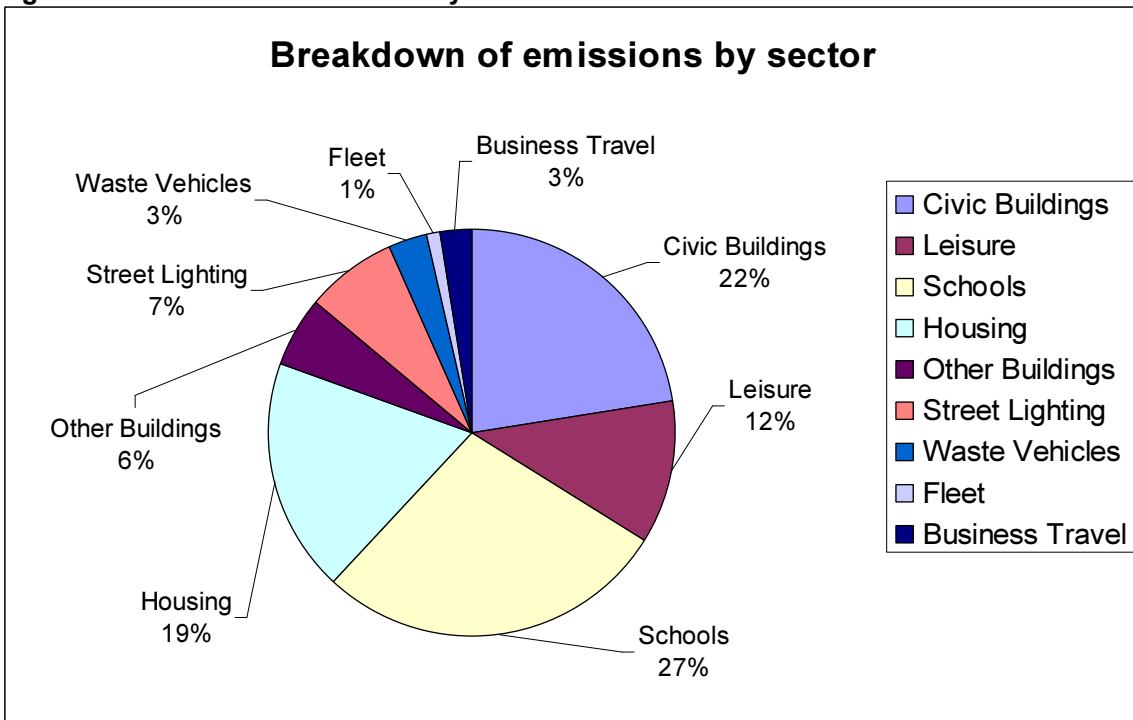


Figure 7: Emissions broken down by Sector



3.3 Projections and Value At Stake

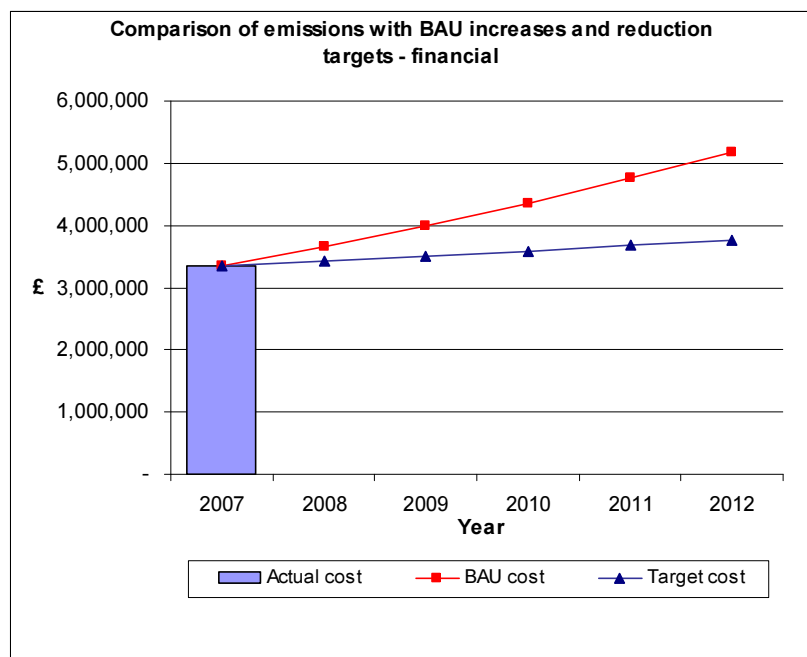
The Cost of Not Doing the Programme

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total Value At Stake (£)	232,717	492,192	781,002	1,101,964	1,458,158
Cumulative Value At Stake (£)	232,717	724,909	1,505,910	2,607,875	4,066,033

Figure 8 (below) shows the comparison between the Government’s predicted increases in energy costs to the Council if it continues ‘Business As Usual’ and does not take steps to reduce its carbon emissions compared with the ‘Reduced Emissions Scenario’ which is the predicted reduction in costs if the Carbon Reduction targets are met. This is known as the Value At Stake (VAS).

The Cumulative Value At Stake (Value At Stake over time) is represented in the graph by the triangular space between the red and blue lines. This has been calculated to be around £4 million if the Council hits the 25% reduction target by 2012. (This does not take into account the cost of implementing the projects).

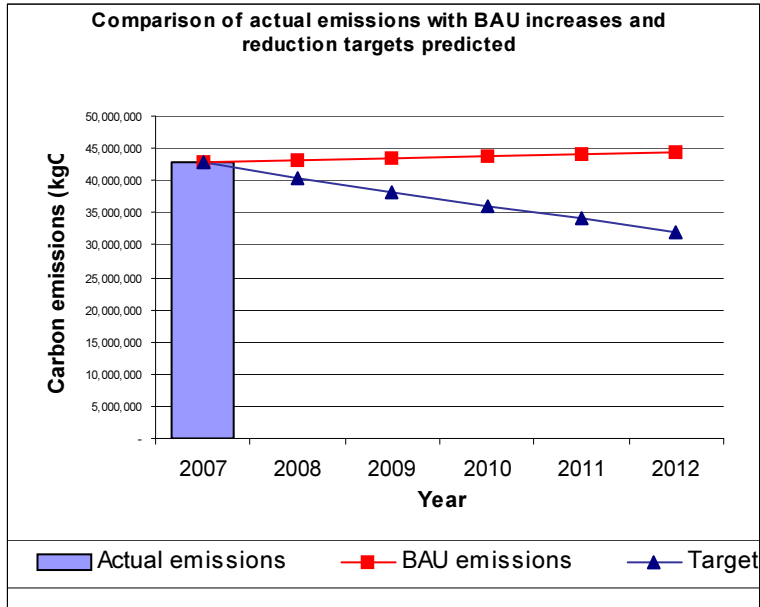
Figure 8 – Financial Value At Stake



[The projections in the Value At Stake graph are based on DTI, BERR and Carbon Trust assumption growth factors]

Figure 9 (below) shows the Carbon Value At Stake. This is the total cumulative CO₂ savings to be gained from achieving the 2012 reduction target of 25% and is calculated to be 37,913 tCO₂. The Business As Usual (BAU) scenario (if no action is taken) is that the Council's carbon footprint will increase by 1,521 tCO₂ to 44,374 tCO₂ per annum by 2012.

Figure 9 – Carbon Value At Stake



4 Carbon Management Projects

This section provides the detail around the Programme’s Carbon Reduction projects, for example how they were identified and prioritised; how the projects move forward, how well they add up against the reduction target and how the shortfall will be met over time and finally how future projects will be identified.

Background

At the beginning of the Programme, the Board and Team began by looking at types of projects from the Carbon Trust’s “Top Ten” list – some of the lower investment projects that have delivered the best savings for other organisations that have participated in the Programme. The Top Ten list is as follows;

- Cavity & Loft Insulation
- Voltage Optimisation
- Variable Speed Drives
- Pool Covers
- Lighting Upgrades & Controls
- Heating Controls & Zoning
- Server Virtualisation
- Printer Rationalisation
- Photocell control streetlights/bollards
- Hybrid/Alternative Fuel Vehicle

Projects have been developed in 7 of the 10 areas. The Council also identified existing projects that were already being undertaken that would also contribute to the Carbon Reduction targets.

4.1 Existing projects

All the projects in this table have funding identified and allocated and are in some stage of implementation.

Ref	Project	Lead	Cost			Annual Saving		Pay back (yrs)	% of Base line	Year
			Cap'l	Rev'ue	Res'ce	Fin (£)	tCO ₂			
RE1	Chillers at Anchorage House	Paul Harvey	18,000		0	N/a	12	4.5	0.028	2008
CL1	Street Lighting - Westferry Circus	Jason Minnette	Existing budgets	0		63,070	37	2.5	0.09	2008
CL2	Leisure centre – pool covers	Andrew Meads	N/a			N/a	100	3	0.42	2009

CL3	Leisure services – Variable Speed Drives	Andre w Meads	N/a			N/a	40	3	0.09	2008
CL4	Green Travel Plan business mileage reduction	Sam Margolis	Existin g budgets			N/a	16	-	0.037	April 2008-2012
TOTALS			18,000			63,070	205		0.67	

4.2 Planned and funded projects

These projects are likely to take place and have funding allocated. They are well defined and the quantification of costs and savings fairly robust (in some cases the costs might need to be amended pending submission of contractor quotes). In order for these projects to move into the 'Existing projects' category, they must either be given senior management approval within the relevant directorate or project implementation must be further defined or any blockages to implementation removed.

Ref	Project	Lead	Cost			Annual Saving		Pay back (yrs)	% of Base line	Year
			Cap'l	Rev'ue	Res'ce	Fin (£)	tCO ₂			
RE2	Mulberry Voltage Optimiser	Paul Harvey	0		0	36,055	368	0	0.86	2009
CL5	EST efficiency / "Eco driving" training for fleet drivers	John Stevens	28,000			19,000	66	1.5	0.15	2009/10
RE3	Corporate Energy Saving campaign (4 main staff buildings - Mulberry, Anchorage, Gladstone, 62 Roman Rd)	?	3,000			£26,596 (3 buildings exc AH)	340	0	0.79	Being delivered over 2 years 2009/11
DR1	System optimisation project at 10 boiler houses within ALMO	Mick Cappe r	Extern ally funde d			N/a	647	N/a	1.5	2009
TOTALS			31,000			£81,651	1,421		3.3%	

4.3 Near term projects

These are projects that are planned to take place but do not as yet have funding allocated. In order to move to the existing projects table, the funding source must be defined and allocated.

Ref	Project	Lead	Cost			Annual Saving		Pay back (yrs)	% of Base line	Year
			Cap'l	Rev'ue	Res'ce	Fin (£)	tCO ₂			
CL6	Parks – 3 operational buildings	Katherine O'Brien	6,300			N/a	24	1.85	0.056	2010/11
CL7	Reduction in Parks contractors' mileage	Katherine O'Brien	0			N/a	16	0	0.037	2011/2012
TOTALS			6,300			0	40		Neg	

4.4 Medium to long term projects

This section includes projects that may take place but are not yet planned in detail. The detail on these may be subject to feasibility studies or further work and therefore the quantification of costs and savings are less accurate.

Ref	Project	Lead	Cost			Annual Saving		Pay back (yrs)	% of Base line	Year
			Cap'l	Rev'ue	Res'ce	Fin (£)	tCO ₂			
RE4	ICT – Thin Client	Paul Ingram	£c3 million			TBC	640	3	1.49	2012
RE4	ICT – Server Rationalisation	Ken Bates	641,000			TBC	512	2.5	1.19	2012
CS1	AMR – all schools	?	?			N/a	1218		2.84	2012
CS2	Energy awareness campaign – all schools	?	?			N/a	255 (5% total)		0.59	2012
CL8	AMR & energy awareness GLL	?	?			N/a	195		0.46	Annually to 2012
CL9	Street lighting bulb replacement programme	Jason Minnette/ Stan Perpie	Within existing budgets				150? TBC			2012
CL10	AMR – 3 Ideas Stores & 5 Libraries	Sian Pipe	?				104		0.24	2012
DR2	Automated Meter Readings (AMR) in council offices*	Sian Pipe	?				1,174		2.74	2012
TOTALS			3,641,000				4,248		9.55	
GRAND TOTAL ALL PROJECTS			3,696,300				5,914		13.62 %	

*Council offices means here – 23 buildings

It should be noted that some projects are not being considered only for Carbon Reduction purposes. For example the ICT Thin Client project offers a host of benefits including reduction in costs for software licensing and will therefore will be considered not only on the value for money it offers in terms of Carbon Reduction (cost per tonne of carbon saved) but in terms of the other benefits.

Further Carbon Reduction Opportunities Being Considered

Over the medium to long term more Carbon Reduction projects will emerge from review of the Asset Management Plan (AMP), the Building Schools for the Future programme and other work programmes. The council is also looking to develop projects in the following areas:

Street lighting/ furniture

There are various street lighting and street furniture projects being considered. The Council has been selected to participate in a pilot project for LED street lighting with the London Development Agency that will be starting in 2009. The street lighting team are also looking at several developments in lighting technology.

Schools

It has been estimated that energy savings of up to 15% could be possible through carrying out a combination of energy saving measures including reviewing heating control settings, upgrading controls, upgrading building fabric insulation/draught proofing, boiler upgrades etc. The carbon footprint of the Borough's 99 schools has been calculated to be 11,910 tCO₂ so potential carbon savings of 1786 tonnes may be achievable or 4.1 % of the baseline.

Energy Management

The council has recently commissioned a monitoring and targeting software database - TEAM Sigma. The database will be used to import all utility bills, eventually including water, check and validate all bills within a nominated tolerance and pass for timely payment. The main advantage being the automated accuracy of the verification resulting in at least a saving of 5-10% over the customary hand checked bills.

Heating and Controls

Reviewing and optimising control settings typically achieves energy savings of 5 - 15% of gas and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) electricity. (Typically HVAC accounts for 35% of total consumption).

AMR - Automated Meter Reading

An AMR implementation programme is on track to install upgraded meters across all council sites and the majority of schools in the borough. Some capital funding has already been secured for this project. The meters will allow data to be fed back half hourly for both gas and electricity pulses directly into the TEAM Sigma software

allowing each site to be accurately measured and recorded. Savings of at least 10-15% can be expected on completion of this project.

Boiler replacement

Boiler plant serviceable life is 20 years so there should be a regular replacement of heating plant across the sites. Replacing an older boiler with an efficiency of 70% with a condensing boiler with a seasonal efficiency of 89% will achieve a 27% energy saving.

Lighting

8% energy savings can be achieved by replacing T12 (38mm) fluorescent lamps with T8 (26mm) fluorescent lamps. Savings of approximately 20% can be achieved by upgrading to electronic light fittings. Lighting controls typically achieve 20 - 40% savings. Lighting upgrades in suitable buildings will be explored by the Facilities Management team.

5. Carbon Management Plan Financing

5.1 Assumptions

- **Assumption 1 - Carbon impact of other council activities**

The impact of projects within the Capital Programme on the Carbon Management Programme has not been measured. There may be building projects scheduled that may negatively impact on the Carbon Reduction targets.

The need to carry out an impact assessment of the Capital Programme and other council work programmes that may impact on this programme has been identified and agreed as an action by Corporate Management Team (CMT) in November 2008. The resources to undertake this piece of work have not yet been identified. However the work should aim to be completed by March 2010.

- **Assumption 2 - Effective project management**

Effective programme management is critical to the success of the Programme as a whole and it is imperative that projects employ council protocol around project management. Where appropriate, risk assessments should be carried out and recorded in the Council's risk register.

- **Assumption 3 - Difficulties of estimating savings per project**

It is difficult to estimate savings per project as the Carbon Reduction will be an estimated figure. The cost of the current utility supplies is already known, however given the volatility of the market, it is difficult to forecast for future years.

For example, a project may save 5,000 kWh of electricity units bringing in a potential saving of £5,000 and then due to an increase of electricity prices by 50%, the £5,000 saving may not be realised. (These values are for example purposes only and do not represent a true example).

It is thought that the majority of the projects are non-cashable on the grounds that current budgets do not reflect actual expenditure. This shall need to be considered in the future and reflected in the medium term financial plan accordingly.

• Assumption 4 - Difficulties in calculating the opening baseline

The Council is in the process of implementing a target and monitoring piece of energy software, which shall capture all energy related information for the Council’s buildings and this will provide substantial information for management. Included in the baseline some properties are shown with their estimated energy consumption as this software is not in place. Therefore, potentially the opening baseline is over or understated..

The collection of some energy usage is difficult due to its nature, for example business travel and therefore there is again potential scope that the opening balance is misstated.

5.2 Benefits / savings – quantified and un-quantified

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Annual cost saving (£)	63,070	81,651	N/a	?
Annual CO₂ saving (tonnes)	193 (projects RE1, CL1, CL2, CL3, CL4)	1,421 (projects RE2, CL5, RE3, DR1)	24 (project CL6)	5,914 (all medium to long term projects & CL7)
%Reduction of baseline	0.45%	3.3%	neg	9.55%

Unquantified benefits:

- This programme will directly contribute towards NI 186. As a consequence of the Council using less gas the levels of atmospheric nitrogen oxides and PM10s reduce, directly assisting performance against NI 194 (Air Quality indicator), whilst improving the efficiency of communal heating helps residents avoid fuel poverty, measured by NI 187.
- Another important benefit is improved reputation with staff, stakeholders and the public

5.3 Additional resources

The Council does not currently have any additional resource identified to invest in Carbon Reduction projects. Therefore it will explore the use of the following two external funding streams that have been identified:

Salix Finance

Salix Finance was set up in 2004 by the Carbon Trust to work exclusively with Local Authorities and other members of the public sector to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions through investment in energy efficiency and renewable technologies. The focus of Salix Finance is that projects must deliver both CO₂ and revenue benefits and operates on a match-funding basis (typically £250,000 on a 50/50 split). A key element of the application is focussed on how energy consumption and costs are captured and monitored and therefore the Council will need to ensure that robust monitoring systems are in place before any application is proposed.

London Climate Change Agency

The London Climate Change Agency (LCCA) is a subsidiary of the London Development Agency (LDA) and implements and supports climate change mitigation projects across London. Their energy efficiency fund provides interest free loans to London Boroughs for compliant energy saving capital projects. Successful projects are funded 50% by the London Development Agency and 50% by Salix Finance. The loan repayments are then reinvested in new projects. The advantage of the LCCA Energy Efficiency Fund is that no match funding is required by the Council and they provide the resource to manage the fund.

Internal Resource

The authority will need to identify an additional fund to invest in Carbon Reduction projects which if feasible could then be used as match funding for Salix Finance. This would need to be proposed in line with the annual budget process for revenue and/or capital resources. The funding would need to operate as a self-financing trading account.

Some schemes, could qualify as invest to save projects and proposals would need to follow procedures already in place for Capital Projects. The project management would need to be robust in order to ensure that savings are made and therefore the funding effectively repaid through the savings achieved by consuming less energy.

Specific agreements would need to be made with schools if project funding was to be provided to them as they are responsible for their own finances and the authority would want to ensure the funding was returned for future reinvestment in further projects.

For example, a project could need £15,000 of investment which will mean a reduction in energy consumption resulting in £5,000 saved on energy costs per annum. This project would therefore pay back the £15,000 over the following three years and then any additional savings would remain with the service or could be offered up as a Gershon saving.

5.4 Financial costs and sources of funding

This is an important table. It summarises the total costs, split into revenue and capital. The Carbon Trust strongly recommends every Carbon Management Programme to have its first two years fully funded.

Figures in £	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Annual costs:	18,000	31,000	6,300	3,696,300 (2 projects only)
Total annual capital cost	18,000	31,000	6,300	3,696,300
Total annual revenue cost				
Total costs	18,000	31,000	6,300	3,696,300
Committed funding:	18,000	31,000	0	0
Committed annual capital				
Committed annual revenue				
Total funded				
Unallocated funding	0	0	6,300	3,696,300
Unallocated annual capital				
Unallocated annual revenue				
Total unfunded	0	0	6,300	3,696,300

6. Actions to Embed Carbon Management in the Organisation

See Appendix A (page 39) for the Embedding Matrix

At the beginning of the Programme (June 2008) the council scored 10 out of a possible 35 points using the Carbon Management Embedding Matrix, scoring an average of 1.4 for each section and performing best in the area of Data Management at 3.5. At the time of writing this Plan, the council has made some improvement and now scores 15 out of a possible 35.

	Corporate Strategy	Prog Managem't	Responsibility	Data Managem't	Comms & Training	Finance & Investment	Policy alignment	Total
June 08	1.5	1	1	3.5	1	1	1	10
April 09	1.5	3	2	4	1.5	2	1	15
April 2011	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	35

The council aims to achieve Level 5 in each of the six sections of the Matrix by April 2011. The Council has already made progress in embedding carbon management within its operational activities. A report was submitted to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) in November 2008 with various recommendations, all of which have been agreed and are included below.

6.1 Corporate Strategy – embedding CO₂ saving across the organisation

The Council currently scores 1.5 for Corporate Strategy. Although it does not have a Climate Change Strategy as yet, this Carbon Management Plan makes reference to Climate Change and is a significant step forward in addressing the council's emissions and reducing its impact. The following actions were agreed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) in November 2008;

- To refer approval of business cases for Carbon Reduction projects to the Asset & Capital Management Board.
- To require that all new capital scheme funding applications include a Carbon Impact Assessment
- To review the Asset Management Plan (AMP) and the Revenue Implications assessment of the 2008-11 Capital Programme to assess the forward CRC risks being created by schemes already agreed within the programme, in the context of the AMP's ability to deliver savings over the medium term.

- To consider whether all 2009/10 Service Plans should include a carbon budget assessment to inform financial planning for 2010/11 and include delivery of identified Carbon Reduction projects

Further actions to make progress in this area include;

- Senior endorsement and publication of the Carbon Management Plan and CO₂ reduction targets
- Inclusion of CO₂ saving targets in the Strategic Plan
- Embedding Carbon Management actions into Strategic, Directorate, Service and Team Plans.

6.2 Programme Management – bringing it all together effectively

The Council currently scores 3 out of 5 against Programme Management. The Carbon Management Board and Team meet regularly and plans are in place for regular reporting to Senior management, for example annual reporting against targets to Cabinet and CMT. Actions to make progress in this area are covered in Section 7 of the Plan.

6.3 Responsibility – being clear that saving CO₂ is everyone's job

The Council currently scores 2 in this area. Carbon Reduction is currently a part time responsibility of a small number of individuals. Actions to make progress in this area include;

- Carbon Management integrated in to responsibilities of department heads and senior managers
- Lead Member identified with responsibility for Carbon Reduction
- Establishing a network of 'carbon champions' across directorates to build engagement at the local level through the Corporate energy saving campaign
- The inclusion of specific carbon saving responsibilities in relevant job descriptions from Heads of Service through to junior positions.
- The use of carbon saving objectives for staff as part of their performance management
- Carbon Reduction targets included in Directorate plans

6.4 Data Management – measuring the difference, measuring the benefit

The Council currently scores 4 in this area. Annual collection of CO₂ emissions must now be undertaken as part of NI 185 reporting. This presents a real challenge, one that this authority shares with all local authorities across the country. Actions to make progress in this area include;

- The asset register will be studied in more depth to identify emissions from sources not already identified
- Where the council does not procure energy for a particular building, the Council will contact the building occupier to request the actual energy consumption data. This will be collected annually.
- To ensure that the Council has a joined up approach to data gathering it is suggested that all data is consolidated enabling a one stop approach for all national indicators, the Carbon Management Programme and the CRC programme. This will be achieved by bespoke reporting automated by the TEAM Sigma database.
- In conjunction with the collection of energy consumption data we will collect other building related information e.g. Gross Internal Area (GIA), type of fuel used, age of the building, thermal performances of building and information on building services equipment, this enable detailed energy analysis of the building to be completed, allowing the worst performing buildings to be targeted for carbon savings projects. This will also ensure £/per tonne of CO₂ savings is minimised.
- Occupiers of the buildings will be notified of their building performance annually. Where a building is the subject of an energy awareness programme, they will be notified of their performance each month. Where the building is part of a carbon saving project, energy savings will be captured and communicated through this Programme and related communications strategy.

6.5 Communication and Training – ensuring everyone is aware

The Council currently scores 1.5 in this area. Staff are currently given Carbon Management information on an ad hoc basis. Actions to make progress in this area include;

- Develop a Communications Plan to communicate the Authority's successes to staff and local residents
- Develop rolling awareness campaign for staff around Carbon Reduction
- Training programme to be developed for specific groups of staff, e.g. support staff, cleaners, security etc

- Carry out staff surveys to monitor staff attitudes to carbon saving
- Put Carbon Management on the Senior Managers Conference agenda
- Inclusion of 'low carbon council culture' guidance in corporate induction programme (10 or so bullet points characterising what is expected of everyone to save carbon, e.g. 'we turn our computers and monitors off when we leave each night')
- Develop Corporate training programme around Carbon Reduction
- Ensure the Aspiring Leaders Programme includes Carbon Management training

6.6 Finance and Investment – the money to match the commitment

This area is covered comprehensively in Section 5 of this Plan. The Council currently scores 2 in this area. Carbon Reduction projects currently rely on ad hoc financing. The Council is looking to apply for funding from the Energy Efficiency Fund operated by the London Climate Change Agency (LCCA), as explained in section 5.3, and will implement the following actions in order to make progress on financing of Carbon Reduction projects;

- Write protocol for all projects being considered by the three corporate boards incorporating whole life costing methodology and funding opportunities. Project owner – Polly Wicks, Procurement. By Dec 2009.
- Set up Invest to Save fund for Carbon Reduction projects. Owner Alan Finch. By Dec 09.
- Look into opportunities for exploring regional collaboration/ shared solutions with other Local Authorities around sustainability agenda e.g bulk procurement of energy, sustainable procurement and Carbon Reduction opportunities. By Dec 09.

6.7 Policy Alignment – saving CO₂ across your operations

The Council currently scores 1 in this area meaning that policy alignment is very weak. Although a comprehensive review of existing policies is yet to happen, the following key actions were agreed by CMT and LAB in November 2008;

- To commence development of a corporate framework to verify, achieve and maintain Carbon Reduction targets over the longer term within the Strategic Plan.
- To amend the Capital Strategy to include the aim of 'reducing the Council's carbon footprint and assisting the community to do likewise'.

Further actions to move forward in this area include;

- Acting on policy alignment opportunities when they arise (for example the Leisure Services strategy is currently being drafted, Carbon Reduction options are currently being explored with colleagues in Leisure services)
- Review of key policies to be undertaken
- Formulate procedure for the ongoing review of policies
- Review of Capital projects from an energy / carbon whole life costing perspective

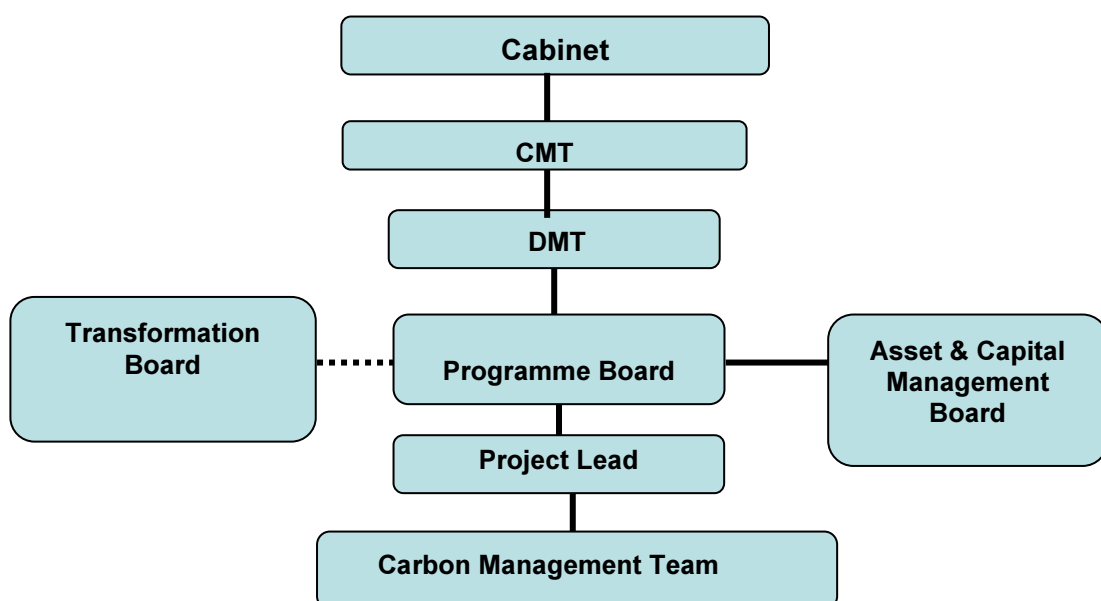
7 Programme Management

Good Programme Governance is fundamental to the success of this Programme. Significant time was spent choosing the right people for the Programme Board – individuals with sufficient knowledge and experience and most importantly commitment to ensuring the Programme’s success. It was also important to ensure that the key areas of the council in carbon management terms were represented.

Responsibility for the day to day running of the Carbon Management Programme falls to the Sustainable Development team within the Development and Renewal directorate, where the Programme Lead sits. It is the responsibility of the Programme Lead to work with project owners to help develop and support Carbon Reduction projects as well as drive forward the Programme as a whole.

7.1 The Programme Board – strategic ownership and oversight

How the Programme Board sits within the council governance structure



From May 2009, the Programme Board will meet monthly. The Board comprises;

- Chair: Jackie Odunoye (Chair)
- Councillor Sponsor: Joshua Peck, Lead Member for Resources
- Finance Champion: Alan Finch
- Programme Leader – Rachel Carless
- William Roberts, Area Director LAPs 7&8
- Robin Beattie – Strategy & Resources, CLC
- Mark Grimley - Organisational Development
- Richard Parsons –Procurement & Corporate Programmes
- Jim Roberts, Head ICT
- Pat Watson, School Buildings Development
- Ann Sutcliffe – Building Schools for the Future (BSF). TBC
- Andy Algar – Corporate Property

Programme Board Terms of Reference:

The Programme Board provides strategic oversight of the Carbon Management Programme. Specifically the Programme Board will:

- Champion and provide leadership on carbon management within the Authority
- Set and review the strategic direction and targets, ensuring the objectives of the Carbon Management Programme are in line with those of the Local Authority
- Own the scope of the Carbon Management Programme and prioritise the list of Carbon Reduction projects which it comprises, ensuring sufficient projects are identified, quantified and prioritised to reach the targets
- Monitor progress towards meeting the objectives and targets, based on reports provided by Rachel Carless, the Programme Lead.
- Remove obstacles to the successful completion of carbon management projects
- Review and champion plans for financial provision to support carbon management projects
- Ensure that there is a framework in place to coordinate the management of projects within the Carbon Management Programme

Board meetings consist of reports on the health of the Programme provided by the Programme Lead. Updates are given on specific projects, risks to the programme, and performance against the aspirational targets. Issues are also discussed such as how the Carbon Management Programme can be effectively integrated into council procedures.

7.2 The Carbon Management Team – delivering the projects

- The Programme Lead will chair quarterly Team meetings
- The Programme Lead will review progress on activities and projects, identifying any blockages that need to be raised with the Programme Board
- The Programme Lead will meet at least monthly with the Project Sponsor to discuss progress.

The Carbon Management Team comprises;

- Rachel Carless (Programme Lead)
- Abdul Khan (Programme deputy)
- Corporate Property Services - Jonathan Arnold
- Energy contracts – Sian Pipe
- Finance – Paul Thorogood
- Communications – Claire Rudd
- Facilities management– Angela Dillon / Paul Harvey
- Street lighting – Stan Perpie
- Street lighting – Jason Minnette
- Fleet management – John Stevens
- Parks – Katherine O'Brien
- Schools - Kevin Joyce
- Sustainable procurement – Imran Yasin/ Ambia Begum
- ICT - Ken Bates
- ICT - Paul Ingram
- Adult Services – Angie Bull
- Leisure Services – Andrew Meads/ Michelle Davies

7.3 Succession planning for key roles

The Programme Sponsor is the Service Head Strategy, Regeneration and Sustainability. Should the current post holder leave this responsibility has been built into the work routine for this role. The Director of Development and Renewal, in future consideration of the responsibilities of this Service Head post will ensure that the function is covered effectively.

The Programme Leader responsibilities will be built into the job description of the Sustainability Officer's role and the Sustainability Manager will make sure that this is adequately resourced in the annual team plan,

7.4 Ongoing stakeholder management

Stakeholder	Means of Communication	How Often Communicated With	Contacted by Whom
Board	Meetings	Monthly	Programme Lead
Team	Meetings, email, phone, in person	Quarterly meetings	Programme Lead
All staff	Via Comms Strategy	As required	Comms Lead
Strategic Partnership	Great Place to Live Community Plan Delivery Group	Bi - monthly	Programme Lead / William Roberts (Board Member)
Community Plan Public Realm Sub Group Delivery Group	Update at meetings	Quarterly	Programme Lead
PCT	Develop Employee engagement strategy	Regular comms through Mark's role of Joint Director Organisational Development for PCT	Mark Grimley (Board Member)
Tower Hamlets Homes	Via THH Board membership	Quarterly	Programme Sponsor
Schools	Headteachers Bulletin & Quarterly schools energy newsletter	Minimum of quarterly	Programme Lead/ Childrens Services Lead
Community Groups and Wider Community	Local press and website	Minimum of quarterly	Comms Lead

7.5 Annual progress review

Progress will be monitored against the target regularly by the programme Board. The Carbon Trust will also follow up to measure the scale of our Carbon Reduction at the end of each financial year. The review will;

- Cover the cost and all benefits from the Programme - financial savings, either cashable or returned to 'rotating fund'



- CO₂ savings against reduction targets
- Less quantifiable benefits, such as influencing the local community (supporting NI 186)
- Align with NI185 reporting
- Report to CMT and Cabinet annually
- Report to DMTs twice yearly

Projected CO₂ savings

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Total annual carbon savings (tCO ₂) of quantifiable projects	193	1,421	24	5,914
			Total	7,552

Appendix A: Carbon Management Matrix - Embedding

	CORPORATE STRATEGY	PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	DATA MANAGEMENT	COMMUNICATION & TRAINING	FINANCE & INVESTMENT	POLICY ALIGNMENT *
BEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top level target allocated across organisation CO₂ reduction targets in Directorate Business Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet / SMT review progress against targets on quarterly basis Quarterly diagnostic reports provided to Directorates Progress against target published externally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CM integrated in responsibilities of senior managers CM part of all job descriptions Central CO₂ reduction advice available Green Champions leading local action groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly collation of CO₂ emissions for all sources Data externally verified M&T in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> buildings street lighting waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff given formalised CO₂ reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> induction and training communications Joint CM communications with key partners Staff awareness tested through surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance committed for 2+ yrs of Programme External funding being routinely obtained Ring-fenced fund for Carbon Reduction initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO₂ friendly operating procedure in place Central team provide advice and review, when requested Barriers to CO₂ reduction routinely considered and removed
5							
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO₂ reduction commitment in Corporate Strategy Top level targets set for CO₂ reduction Climate Change Strategy reviewed annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor reviews progress and removes blockages through regular Programme Boards Progress against targets routinely reported to Senior Mgt Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CM integrated in to responsibilities of department heads Cabinet / SMT regularly updated Staff engaged through Green Champion network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual collation of CO₂ emissions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> buildings street lighting transport waste Data internally reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff given CO₂ reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> induction communications CM matters communicated to external community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated financing for CO₂ reduction projects via Programme Board Finances committed 1yr ahead Some external financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive review of policies complete Lower level policies reviewed locally Unpopular changes being considered
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO₂ reduction vision clearly stated and published Climate Change Strategy endorsed by Cabinet and publicised with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core team regularly review CM progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actions profile & targets new opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An individual provides full time focus for CO₂ reduction and coordination across the organisation Senior Sponsor actively engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collation of CO₂ emissions for limited scope i.e. buildings only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental / energy group(s) given ad hoc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> training communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A view of the cost of CO₂ reduction is developing, but finance remains ad-hoc Some centralised resource allocated Finance representation on CM Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All high level and some mid level policies reviewed, irregularly Substantial changes made, showing CO₂ savings
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Climate Change Policy Climate Change references in other strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc reviews of CM actions progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO₂ reduction a part-time responsibility of a few department champions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CO₂ emissions data compiled Energy data compiled on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular awareness campaigns Staff given CM information on ad-hoc basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc financing for CO₂ reduction projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial review of key, high level policies Some financial quick wins made
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No policy No Climate Change reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CM monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No recognised CO₂ reduction responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CO₂ emissions data compiled Estimated billing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No communication or training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific funding for CO₂ reduction projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No alignment of policies for CO₂ reduction

* Major operational policies and procedures, e.g. Capital Projects, Procurement, HR, Business Travel
The black line represents the council's current position (at March 2009). The target is to reach Level 5 in all areas by April 2011.

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Agenda Item 6.3

COMMITTEE	DATE	CLASSIFICATION	REPORT NO.	AGENDA ITEM NO.
Cabinet	8th April 2009	Unrestricted	CAB 140/089	
REPORT OF Corporate Director (Communities, Localities & Culture)		TITLE Communities, Localities & Cultural Services Directorate Capital Programme 2009/2010		
ORIGINATING OFFICER(S) Luke Cully - Finance Manager Communities, Localities & Culture		Wards Affected All		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to the Capital Programme for Communities Localities & Cultural Services Directorate for 2009/2010.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Include the schemes listed in appendices A & B to the report within the Communities Localities & Cultural Services Directorate's 2009/2010 Capital Programme.
- 2.2 Subject to the identification of available funding as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report, adopt Capital Estimates (sum specified in estimated scheme cost column) for the schemes as outlined in Appendices A & B to the report.
- 2.3 Agree that the Council's Measured Term Contracts be used for the implementation of the Transportation and Highways Works where appropriate.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 This report contains details of schemes which will form the Communities Localities & Cultural Services Capital Programme for 2009/2010 and in accordance with Financial Procedure FP3.3. Cabinet are requested to approve capital estimates for the projects. Funding for the programme is available from the following sources.

- Local Priorities Programme (LPP)
- Transport for London (TfL)
- Developer Contributions (S106)
- Capital Grants

3.2 All schemes link with the Council's Strategic Plan and Community Plan. Priority will be given to those schemes which are time constrained and must be subject to practical completion by the 31st March 2010. The estimated cost of schemes within the attached programme is approximately £5.8m, (Council contribution £1.45m, Transport for London LIP £2.24m, S106 £1.72m, Capital Grants £400k) and funding identified for schemes at this stage equates approximately to this level.

4.0 **TfL - LIP ALLOCATION –TRANSPORTATION & HIGHWAYS CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

4.1 The Transportation & Highways capital programme for 2009/10 is developed from successful bids to a variety of funding sources including the Local Implementation Plan bid to Transport for London, and the Council's own Local Priorities Programme. In total the amount of capital funding available for 2009/10 totals approximately £2.2m at this stage.

4.2 Capital estimates include a fee of 20% of the total works cost which contributes towards the cost of staff resources engaged in the entire scheme development process from inception to construction. These fees are currently under review with other Local Authorities and external agencies to ensure that value for money is maintained for the service.

4.3 This capital programme aims to deliver the programme set out in the Council's Local Implementation Plan for transport, progress on which will be reported to a future Cabinet. Schemes funded under the Local Area Agreement are targeted at meeting stretch targets on road safety and mandatory targets for the introduction and implementation of school travel plans set by central Government and are also consistent with the LIP aims.

4.4 All works are fully funded and further opportunities may arise through the year to supplement this funding. Details of schemes and funding are included at Appendix A and Members are recommended to adopt the capital estimates for these schemes in order to facilitate efficient delivery of the programme. As in previous years the Council's Capital Works Contract will be utilised for the implementation of the Programme in addition to other specialist Measured Term Contracts for drainage, street lighting and road marking works.

5. **OTHER SERVICES**

- 5.1 Appendix B sets out the Capital Programme for the remainder of the Directorates Services (Culture, Community Safety and Public Realm) and consists of schemes intended to improve the Borough's Parks and Open Space leading to increased participation in activities linked to these services, as outlined within the Council's Strategic Plan and Open Space Strategy, improvements to Bancroft Library and further investment in CCTV and Environmental Improvements in pursuit of reducing crime and anti social behaviour.

6. **COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- 6.1 This report outlines to Committee the Capital Programme for Communities Localities & Cultural Services Directorate for 2009/2010. Schemes within the programme will only be able to proceed when requisite resources have been identified and necessary Capital Estimates approved.
In utilising the Measured Term Contracts, the Head of Public Realm must be satisfied that these represent value for money for the Council.

7. **CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)**

- 7.1 Cabinet is requested to approve estimates for projects identified in the appendices for the Communities, Localities and Cultural Services Directorate capital programme.
- 7.2 In accordance with Financial Procedure FP 3.3, Senior Managers are required to obtain a capital estimate for any scheme in the capital programme. Where the estimate is over £250,000 the approval of the adoption of that capital estimate must be sought from the Cabinet.
- 7.3 There is no legal impediment to approval of the estimates, which apparently relate to projects within the Council's statutory functions. It will be the responsibility of officers to ensure that in respect of individual projects the Council complies with its obligation as a best value authority within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

8. **ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The Council's Accessible Transport Consultative Forum advises and directs traffic and transport projects from the point of view of people with mobility impairments. Direct engagement between users and providers has enabled several improvements to be made in service delivery, including the accessibility projects which have been funded in this programme.

9. **SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR GREENER ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The use of monies as outlined within the report will support current policies to improve the local environment.

10. **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 All Projects will be closely monitored to ensure that programmes are completed on time and within budget and to ensure that the Council is not exposed to financial risk.

11. **EFFICIENCY STATEMENT**

11.1 All Transportation & Highways Capital Schemes will be implemented using the new Measured Term Contract. Efficiencies in the management and administration of this contract will be achieved in 2009/10 through reductions in numbers of low value individual works orders and invoices, and through introduction of on-line invoicing systems.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Transportation & Highways Schemes
Appendix B – Other Schemes

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 SECTION 100D (AS AMENDED)

LIST OF “BACKGROUND PAPERS” USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief Description of background paper	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
Capital Programme papers & files	Luke Cully 5221 Anchorage House

Appendix A - Transport & Highways Schemes

Programme Category	Scheme	Capital Estimate £'000 (incl fees)	Funding Source	Scheme Details
20mph Zones	Zone 10 arbour square	130	TfL	Signing for 20 mph zone and traffic calming which will be designed to slow traffic and to improve accessibility for pedestrians moving around within the zone e.g. junction entry treatments and speed Junction Review
Bus Priority	Vallance road /bethnal green road junction	30	TfL	Implementation of measures from D8 Bus Route Studt (27/11/08) Footway cutback to inset pay & display parking in front of Somerfield car park, modifications to speed table (j/w Goldalming St) and revised Waiting & Loading
Bus Priority	Chrip street	50	TfL	Implementation of measures from 309 Bus Route Study (27/10/08). Rationalise traffic calming.
Bus Priority	Cordelia street	66	TfL	Implementation of measures from 309 Bus Route Study (27/10/08). Alterations to traffic calming and relocation of on-street parking bays and bus stops.
Bus Priority	Blair street	44	TfL	Implementation of measures from 309 Bus Route Study (27/10/08). Alterations to traffic calming and relocation of on-street parking bays including inset parking bay.
Bus Priority	Aberfeldy street	45	TfL	Parking survey with a view to half on half off parking.
Bus Priority	Burcham street	25	TfL	Contribution to Borough Project Management Costs.
Bus Stop Accessibility	Borough administration	15	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.bp2691	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.bp2692	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.bp2698	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.15141	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.36868	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.15136	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.

Appendix A - Transport & Highways Schemes (Cont)

Programme Category	Scheme	Capital Estimate £'000 (incl fees)	Funding Source	Scheme Details
Bus Stop Accessibility	BSA stop no.3201	10	TfL	To improve accessibility for boarding and alighting buses, by the provision of pavement work and kerb re-alignments or height alterations and the removal or relocation of any obstructions.
Environment	Eco-lock bike	15	TfL	OYBike cycle hire scheme. Under review with TfL to ensure no duplication with Mayor's bike hire scheme.
Environment	Spitalfields/brick lane pm2.5 monitoring	20	TfL	Approx. 10 stations will be located in designated area to monitor the impact of PM _{2.5} and justify the sustainable transport improvements e.g.20mph zones and to monitor and improve air quality in Spitalfields area and along Brick Lane.
LCN	Link 195 - Narrow Street between Spert Street and Horseferry Road	200	TfL	Consider cycle contraflow or shared area with pedestrian priority. Include parking review and improved access to swing bridge.
LCN	Link 195 - St James Garden	20	TfL	Upgrade access to & from the park, including the facilities, signing and improvements to layout of gate and shared use area.
LCN	Link 200 - the greenway	20	TfL	Redesign cycle barrier, lighting, markings, improve entrance to Greenway.
LCN	Link 200 - old ford road	70	TfL	Provide a cycle contraflow, upgrade signals.
LCN	Link 199 - vynesr street; mowlem street;	55	TfL	General Improvements along cycir route 199: signing lining etc.
Local Safety Schemes	Cable st/watney st	100	TfL	Proposed amendment to street furniture at j/w Cable Street and one way working northbound between Martha Street and Cable Street
Local Safety Schemes	Speed indicator devices	5	TfL	Installation of 5 further Speed Indicator Devices
Local Safety Schemes	Zebra crossing halos	120	TfL	Zebrite belisha beacon Halos to be erected to a number of belisha beacons in Old Ford Road & Globe Road.
Non-LCN+ Cycling Schemes	Cycle parking	30	TfL	Continuation of Installation programme of cycle parking racks.
Non-LCN+ Cycling Schemes	Cycle scheme 02	30	TfL	Castlemaine Street
Non-LCN+ Cycling Schemes	Delivery & signage - ncn routes 1 & 13	50	TfL	Signing and lining, as lead borough for programme covering routes crossing several boroughs.
Principal Road Renewal	Cambridge heath road	277	TfL	Resurfacing, adjust ironwork, thermoplastic lining and anti-skid treatment. Upgrade of street lighting.
School Travel Plans	Old ford school	30	TfL	To implement safer route to school type works in the vicinity of schools with approved travel plans who have requested streetscape measures to encourage more walking and cycling by students and staff, and reduce car usage by the whole school community.
Travel Awareness	In my town without car (car free day)	10	TfL	To raise awareness of alternative travel options and encourage individuals to leave their car at home.

Appendix A - Transport & Highways Schemes (Cont)

Programme Category	Scheme	Capital Estimate £'000 (incl fees)	Funding Source	Scheme Details
Travel Awareness	Bike week	9	TfL	To raise awareness of alternative travel options and encourage individuals to consider using a bike as a means of transport
Travel Awareness	Estate cycling plan	8	TfL	There are strong request from the public and small businesses for on street cycle parking, further more recent survey from local housing estates indicated a strong support and demand for cycle storage in local areas.
Walking	Abbott road	153	TfL	Closure of Abbott Road adjacent to local park to improve accessibility and create a more pleasant environment in the vicinity of the park.
Walking	Mile end to limehouse	65	TfL	On going project to create a viable new 'green' walking route between Limehouse Stations (DLR &NR) and Mile End Park/Mile End Stadium. Improve pedestrian priority at junctions and crossing facilities along the route, accessibility, sightlines and signage; attractiveness, interest and human scale of the route.
Street Lighting	Street Lighting Improvements Low energy lanterns	200	LPP	Planned maintenance to prolong the life of the asset whilst introducing more sustainable infrastructure to
Olympic Development	Optem's feasibility work	25	ODA (Sec106)	To develop schemes for future funding bids relating to ameliorating traffic impact of the Games.
Environmental Improvements	Cuba Street - Footways	13	S106	Replace and renew footways.
Cycling on Greenways	Bethnal Green to Olympic Park	50	TfL	Sustrans connect 2 route with 25k in 2010/11
Environmental improvements	Cuba Street, Manilla Street, Tobago Street and Byng Street	871	S106	Streetscene, traffic calming, traffic management, cycle / pedestrian and environmental improvements.
Olympic Programme	Salmon Lane junction with Rhodeswell Rd (Datasheet 7a)	45	TfL	Reassessment of priority at this junction to improve facility for cyclist
Olympic Programme	South of Roman Road - Mile End Park underneath the bridge on Roman Road (Datasheet 2a)	10	TfL	Chicanes on either side of the bridge
Olympic Programme	Mile End Park (north) (Datasheet 2a)	12	TfL	Parallel access point through the park, i.e. not at 90 degrees to towpath with improved signing
Olympic Programme	Mile End Park Central - Route through Palm Tree PH (Datasheet 3a)	5	TfL	Propose cycle route through the car park, signing and marking
Olympic Programme	Railway Bridge, Mile End Park next to Climbing wall (Datasheet 4a)	25	TfL	Widen towpath for 50m including relocating lighting columns - proposal to incorporate works with the new bridge (Meath Bridge)
Olympic Programme	Regents Canal - Railway Bridge, Mile End Park (Datasheet 4a)	5	TfL	Lighting to be provided under rail bridge
Olympic Programme	Mile End Park Central - Between Roman Rd and Mile End Park (Datasheet 5a)	10	TfL	Remove barriers at entrance to park and replace with soft planting to create chicane effect

Appendix A - Transport & Highways Schemes (Cont)

Programme Category	Scheme	Capital Estimate £'000 (incl fees)	Funding Source	Scheme Details
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Rhodeswell Rd/Mile End Park Entrance (Datasheet 7a)	10	TfL	Remove section of railings and bollards to widen approach for cyclist
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Regents Canal Towpath - Between Chimney & toucan crossing of Rodeswell Rd (Datasheet 7a)	25	TfL	Widen towpath into the park to facilitate shared use path
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Past chimney to Turners Rd (Datasheet 7a)	40	TfL	Improve diverge past chimney for cyclist
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Narrow Street (Datasheet 5a)	12.15	TfL	Provide contra-flow cycle facility
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Narrow Street/Thames Path (Datasheet 4f)			Install mirror
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Ornamental Canal, Waterman Way/Mace Close (Datasheet 3a)	20.25	TfL	Replace stairs with access ramps
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Keppler Wharf, Thames Path (Datasheet 4f)	35.303	TfL	Remove stepped area, widen access ramp and relocate seating
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Glamis Road (Datasheet 4b)	36.855	TfL	Crossing facility for cyclist across Glamis Road, install chicane to slow traffic
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Thames Path - Stone Stairs/Jardine Road (Datasheet 4d)	12.42	TfL	Feasibility study to replace bridge
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Shadwell basin - Glamis Road (Datasheet 4a)	38.813	TfL	Widen section around 90 degree bend with cantilevered structure
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Manchester Rd (Datasheet 2c)	44.8	TfL	Advisory cycle lane
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Island Gardens (Datasheet 2d)	44	TfL	New route through park
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Prestons Road (Datasheet 2b)	1.7	TfL	Advisory cycle lane
Olympic Programme	Walking and Cycling Blackwall Way (Datasheet 2a)	4	TfL	Improve lighting
Sustrans	Bethnal Green to Victoria park	300	Sustrans	Improve facility on Sustrans connect 2 route with 100k in 2010/11, 100k already approved via Meath Bridge cabinet report on 11th Feb 09
	Total	3,658		

Appendix B - Other Schemes

Category	Scheme	Capital Estimate (incl Fees) £'000	Funding Source £'000	Scheme Details
Key Parks	Bethnal Green Gardens – Improvements.	460	LPP/Sec 106	Improvements to sport surfaces, roadways, play areas and landscape treatment
Key Parks	Millwall Park/Island Gdns	200	Sec 106	Improvements to childrens play areas, integration of site with Mudchute, tree planting based on an agreed Masterplan
Key Parks	Meath Gardens Improvements	150	LPP	Key accessibility improvements to integrate a new parkland area with new bridge, entrance, lighting and security improvements
Local Priority Parks	Poplar Park	240	Sec 106	Continuation of programme to improve infrastructure, bring a redundant building into positive use, refurbish tennis facilities, landscape enhancement
Local Priority Parks	St Johns Park	109	Sec 106	Improvement of multi use games area, redesign of wheel park and children's play area, footpath improvements
Local Priority Parks	Wapping Gdns	100	LPP	Improvement of multi use games area, landscape improvements, biodiversity enhancement
Local Priority Parks	Cantrell Rd Open Space	100	LPP	Work will improve integration with the cemetery park through landscape and biodiversity enhancements, natural play area and related facilities
Local Priority Parks	Stepney Green Gdns	55	LPP/Sec 106	Low key improvements to improve infrastructure and landscape diversity of this site with heritage value
Libraries	Bancroft Library - Improvements	255	LPP	To undertake Health & Safety work, renovate and redecorate public areas of the library and install improved IT access
Preventing Crime	CCTV Investment Funding.	500	LPP	CCTV Investment Funding to increase CCTV coverage in view of the success of the CCTV Control Centre, and to replace life expired equipment where CCTV is still justified
	Total	2,169		

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Agenda Item 8.1

Committee: Cabinet	Date: 8 April 2009	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 141/089	Agenda Item:
Report of: Corporate Director Kevan Collins Originating officer(s) Mary Durkin Service Head		Title: Report of the Commission into the Public Safety of Young People Wards Affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report summarizes the commission's findings, and makes a number of recommendations. These recommendations will be presented to the Stay Safe Community Plan development Group and to Cabinet, as part of the report, with a view to incorporation in the next Youth Justice Plan, and other relevant planning tools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to endorse the recommendations of the commission.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Officers were asked in May last year to convene a commission into the public safety of young people in the borough, as part of the overall community safety strategy. The commission met six times from September to December 08.
- 3.2 The commission was composed of senior representatives from relevant organisations including the local authority, Metropolitan Police, academics, those involved in the justice system and members of the community. Witnesses were called and documentary evidence was submitted. In particular, commissioners listened to scores of young people, to their parents and teachers, and to people who had been victims of crime. There were six commission sessions in total between October and December 2008.
- 3.3 The findings of the commission, in line with “Time for Action”, the mayor’s report on youth violence across London (Nov 08), were that reporting is disproportionate, and that violence is not as rampant as we are led to believe. The vast majority of teenagers are law abiding, and the crime rate is falling. Moreover, knife crime and gang culture are less prevalent in Tower Hamlets than in similar boroughs. Nevertheless, a worrying number of young people are nervous travelling within the borough and violence and anti-social behaviour are real features of life on the streets.
- 3.4 Commissioners looked at the causes of violence and the fear of violence. They have made recommendations which they believe will help prevent knife crime, reduce anti-social behaviour, and address the fear of crime on the streets. The recommendations are included here in the body of the report. The full report is appended.

4. BODY OF REPORT

4.1 Outcomes of the Commission’s Report

Having received and heard evidence from various sources, the commission is confident that Tower Hamlets offers a very good environment in which most of the residents, most of the time, can live and learn safely and happily. The recommendations from the commissioners address the exceptional circumstances when young people are at risk, and the environment is less secure.

I One Tower Hamlets

Commissioners noted that there was a disparity between the image and the reality of safety in the borough. In particular, the reputation of young people and the quality of community relations suffered from sensationalist reporting in some newspapers and television programmes. As a result there was a danger of a culture of fear developing, between cultures and generations. Commissioners were convinced that we should counter this with positive reporting and celebrating the successes in the borough. We must value distinct cultures in the borough, and draw young people and adults together, promoting inter-generational and inter-cultural work wherever possible. We should:

- Ensure young people's representation to feed into the Living Safely/ CDRP groups
- Promote and fund inter-generational working in the borough
- Develop and encourage volunteering schemes for the Olympics, where young people and adults work closely together
- Endorse positive action schemes for young people

II A Great Place to Live

Commissioners noted the disparity between popular belief and evidence – particularly in regards to the high fear of crime and the fact that actual crime has fallen over the last 7 years. We should:

- Ensure accurate information exchange between agencies
- Myth busting – narrowing the gap between perceptions and the evidence
- Avoid the vilification of young people
- Ensure resources are directed towards early intervention/family projects (e.g. YIP, YISP & FIP)

III A Prosperous Community

The commission wants our young people to fully engage in the educational, artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities within the borough as well as focussing upon the rich learning experience provided by schools and colleges. We should:

- Ensure greater focus upon the arts and creative projects for the ‘hard to reach’ groups of young people
- Ensure young people have access to improve their skills levels (e.g. social & communication skills) to adequately prepare them for training & work
- Re-settlement pledge for all young offenders leaving custody to ensure ‘wrap around’ services proportionate to their needs and risk

IV A Safe and Supportive Community

The commission believes the use of Restorative Justice (RJ) across agencies is a key model of working with young people. In suitable cases young people to attend a RJ meeting, admit the harm they have caused, and then put in place a process of righting that wrong by understanding the core values of their community. We should:

- Develop a borough-wide policy of central training, and adequate resourcing of RJ
- Promote the value of Play within the borough
- Implement the ‘New Destiny Trust’ model, whereby ex-offenders work with young gang members to de-glamorize and divert these youngsters
- Focus support for young people on the transition period between the end of Primary, and the start of Secondary school
- Ensure that travel for young people is safe, particularly when moving between areas and postcodes
- Support young people to resist bullying in and out of school
- Prioritise early intervention strategies and positive engagement of families – e.g. working with families of young offenders

V A Healthy Community

The commission noted that from the medical evidence presented that young people were getting seriously hurt within our communities. The Consultant Trauma Surgeon at the Royal London Hospital presented his perspective of a ‘parental postcode’: those children raised in poverty may

be less likely to adequately safeguard their own children, and this cycle perpetuates. We should:

- Provide more information to young people about knife crime and its consequences
- Improve the disclosure between the police and NHS around knife crime injuries
- Intelligence sharing and positive partnership working in order that the evidence that the supply of drugs to young people is significantly reduced
- Look at ways of ensuring licensees, parents and older siblings are held to account for an unchecked pattern of underage drinking

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 6.1 In 2008 the East London Borough of Tower Hamlets established a commission which set itself the task of looking at how serious the problem is and what can be done to make young people safe. The report produced a series of recommendations which it believes will help prevent knife crime and reduce anti-social behaviour.

All of the recommendations build on existing youth service delivery within the borough and, as such, the enhanced provision will be contained within existing budgets.

7. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

- 7.1 Cabinet is asked to endorse recommendations made by the Commission into the Public Safety of Young People.
- 7.2 The recommendations are expressly targeted towards the Council's goal of One Tower Hamlets and associated themes expressed in the Community Plan for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Tower Hamlets.
- 7.3 Endorsement of the Commission's recommendations is consistent with the Council's duty under the Children Act 2004 to ensure that every child whatever their background or circumstances has the support they need to be safe.
- 7.4 It may also be possible to justify the endorsement by reference to the well-being power in section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, having regard to the links made to the Community Plan. That power authorises the Council to do anything it considers likely to promote improvement of the economic, social and environmental well being of Tower Hamlets (provided it is not otherwise prohibited by statute).

8. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The thrust of this work is to promote One Tower Hamlets, developing a cohesive community in which young people can move freely geographically and socially.

9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

9.1 There are no specific implications for a greener environment, although increased involvement of young people in positive activities and volunteering should, long-term, have a positive impact on the condition of the streets, reducing litter, graffiti, and low-level vandalism.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Risk management implications are addressed within the individual plans

11. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

Reports concerned with proposed expenditure, reviewing or changing service delivery or the use of resources must now incorporate an Efficiency Statement.

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of "back ground papers"	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
To be completed by author	To be completed by author ext. xxx

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – The Report

**INDEPENDENT COMMISSION INTO
THE PUBLIC SAFETY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN
TOWER HAMLETS**

DRAFT

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Executive Summary

Knife crime, reports and fears of teenage gangs, a climate of fear of on the streets: these are some of the concerns of the press, and often the fears of the residents. In response, in 2008 Tower Hamlets established a commission which set itself the task of looking at how serious the problem is and what can be done to make young people safe.

The commission was composed of senior representatives from relevant organisations including the local authority, Metropolitan Police, academics, those involved in the justice system and members of the community. Witnesses were called and documentary evidence was submitted. In particular, commissioners listened to scores of young people, to their parents and teachers, and to people who had been victims of crime. There were six commission sessions in total between October and December 2008.

The findings of the commission, in line with "Time for Action", the mayor's report on youth violence across London (Nov 08), were that reporting is disproportionate, and that violence is not as rampant as we are led to believe. The vast majority of teenagers are law abiding, and the crime rate is falling. Moreover, knife crime and gang culture are less prevalent in Tower Hamlets than in similar boroughs. Nevertheless, a worrying number of young people are nervous travelling within the borough and violence and anti-social behaviour are real features of life on the streets.

Commissioners looked at the causes of violence and the fear of violence. They have made recommendations which they believe will help prevent knife crime, stop young people becoming involved in gangs, and address the fear of crime on the streets.

Foreword

Councillor Lutfur Rahman

As Leader of Tower Hamlets Council I am delighted to introduce the report of the Independent Commission into the Public Safety of Young People, the outcome of an investigation into concerns about violence on the streets. Why has the number of young people murdered across the capital been rising? Just how serious is the problem, and what can we do about it? These, and numbers of related questions exercised us throughout the autumn of 2008, and our findings and recommendations are recorded here.

Commissioners want to be sure that enough is being done to protect young people. We were concerned to see that often young people were not confident that older people and the community at large could protect them, and that when young people go out they are "on their own". This must change. We not only want to cut crime, we also have an obligation to protect young people; we must accept that responsibility.

Issues around knife crime and gang culture are deeply complex, which is why the commission sought the views of so many expert witnesses, including young people themselves. The commission was highly impressed with the quality of the witnesses, and the way young people spoke eloquently and intelligently about their experience.

This report includes a series of recommendations that all the organisations forming the Tower Hamlets Partnership are committed to acting on to ensure young people, and the rest of the community, feel safe. The report makes for surprising reading, and we believe it reflects the thoroughness, seriousness and commitment of all those who took part and are working to make Tower Hamlets a safer place to live.

Cllr Lutfur Rahman

Chair

February 2009

Introduction

This multi-agency panel was established to determine the extent of violent crime and the prevalence of gang culture in the borough, and to find lasting, practical and radical solutions to these and linked issues.

What are we doing right and what more needs to be done? What services are available for young people to keep them, and the communities in which they live, safe? How do we stop young people joining gangs in the first place? These are a few of the questions the commission was set up to address.

Perception and reality

Recently the media has reported a number of tragic cases of violent crime in which young people have died as a result of knives, firearms and assaults. These crimes have mainly taken place in deprived areas of our larger cities. This commission noted that here in Tower Hamlets, despite the fact it scores highly on many of the indices of deprivation, the problem is less severe than in similar boroughs.

Tower Hamlets has many of the same social problems as other areas in which gang-related violence is much worse. Levels of deprivation are high by most indicators; housing is often poor and overcrowded; the youth population is proportionally high and there are relatively few large open spaces.

Nevertheless, Tower Hamlets is a safer place for young people, and the population as a whole, than many of its neighbours. Last year (2008) not one young person died in the borough as a result of violent crime. In 2008, within the 33 boroughs of London, Tower Hamlets was 18th for violent crime and 22nd for robbery. These figures were not comforting, but neither were they alarming. Our young people are our future, and we must invest in our future. We are fortunate within the borough that through the Tower Hamlets Partnership, young people's level of participation and involvement in decision making is comparatively high. The aim is to build on this work and to place Tower Hamlets near or at the top of these tables.

Although the most recent police data show that the rate of knife crime is falling, our most recent residents' survey showed that the public perception is that knife crime is rising. It is important to differentiate between the scale of concern felt by the public and the scale of the problem dealt with by the agencies involved in prevention.

Moreover, any future course of action must deal with the twin approach public safety, and the perception of public safety.

The recent Tower Hamlets Residents Panel Consultation report conveyed a cautionary note of realism:

"46% felt that anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood had stayed the same over the past 3 years. A third felt it had got worse. Younger respondents were most likely to feel anti-social behaviour has got worse. 'Teenagers hanging around on the street' was perceived to be the biggest problem in respondents' local areas." (1)

So there is an underlying public concern to address, and we are clear that this will be a test for both the Tower Hamlets Partnership and the local community. This commission has looked at what we are doing better than our neighbours, but also at what we can learn from their experiences.

It's important that we distinguish perception from reality. One effect of the media focus on gangs and violence is that many people believe crime is worse than it really is; that the streets are dangerous and out of control and that "no-go zones" exist in our cities.

This phenomenon becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: if people are too scared to go out after dark, then the only people left on the street are those who are either unafraid or who have no choice. We need to demonstrate that violent crime is relatively low, violent criminals are locked up, and most young people aren't involved in gangs or crime. In fact, they are more often than not the victims. As was noted in the DCSF's Youth Crime Action Plan:

"Youth crime means young victims. Young people can be victims of crime as well as the perpetrators. In fact they are more likely than adults to be victims of crime. Our criminal justice system aims to 'put the victim at the centre'. However, many young people do not report crime, are not involved in the justice system and are therefore not accessing the support on offer to them." (2)

What is a "gang"?

Great care should be taken when choosing terms like "gangs" and "groups", "young people" and "youths." It's not always easy to distinguish between a group of young people and a gang – especially when walking down the street, or when lots of young people enter the DLR carriage. The media's sensationalising of gang culture can lead us to assume that all young people are "up to no good", and a threat to those around them.

We know that young people feel a great deal of frustration that so much of the attention paid to them by the media is negative. A focus on gangs, knives, guns, hoodies, "postcode wars", all reinforce public perceptions that young people are out of control.

It is especially important to define the difference between a gang and a group of young people. A great many academic studies have sought to define what constitutes a "gang". For the purposes of this report, the commission used the definition given by the Islington Report:

"...a group of people coming together on a regular basis in order to commit crime." (3)

Using this definition, most young people in the borough are not members of any gang, and probably have no intention of ever joining one. Nevertheless, many young people do tend to congregate in large numbers, particularly when traversing the borough and beyond, because they *feel* safer.

Historical and geographical perspectives

Territorialism is nothing new, particularly in areas like the East End; Victorian London was a vastly more dangerous place than it is today. There have been gangs for centuries. By the standards of many other major world cities, 21st Century London is relatively safe, and the East End probably safer than at any point in recorded history.

A particularly encouraging finding of this commission is that young people tend to define themselves by their neighbourhood rather than by their race, religion or ethnicity. Where an area is predominantly Bengali, then so are the groups of young people from that area; when the area is mixed, so too is the make-up of local groups. Ours is a tolerant and inclusive borough and we need to celebrate that fact.

However, the commission has identified some worrying trends. As well as consulting specialists, this commission has actively sought the views of young people, many of whom provided personal experiences to the commission. Too many young people in our borough feel afraid to travel, even to and from school. Many are worried by the violence and drugs in their neighbourhood. Some believe that joining a gang will provide them with safety, respect, a sense of belonging and a lifestyle otherwise unobtainable in their lives.

We need to show young people that gangs and knives make them less safe, not more; that being feared is not the same as earning respect; that this sense of belonging gangs claim to offer is false; there are other ways to become happy, successful adults, without any of the dangers that are the result of being in a gang.

Consultation

Ours is one of the first local authorities to have established a commission into young people's safety. We have been extremely impressed by the thoroughness of the recent Islington Report, whose authors provided excellent guidance as we planned and set up our own commission.

It was obvious from the start that to get a full picture, and find the right answers, we needed to formulate cross-directorate strategies and multi-organisational involvement. Consequently we invited an influential range of witnesses and commission members of the highest quality and from the highest levels across a wide range of relevant parties, including health, the law and academia.

As part of the consultation, members of the commission also visited organisations and projects which are working to combat knife crime and gang culture. Then they reported back to the commission with their findings. Each member of the commission also read extensive background literature – reports, articles, and academic papers – to inform them in their decision-making.

There are many questions that can only be answered by young people themselves. What do young people experience, what are they afraid of, and what do they want us to do to enable them to make the right choices in their lives?

What makes our commission distinctive, and its findings so relevant, is the level of input provided by young people. A survey was conducted by Tower Hamlets Youth Service, and the main questions centred on 'Crime and Safety – how does it affect you?' The survey was conducted on an internet blog (amp.uk.net) as well as through a focus group and at Young Democracy Week.

It is the input by so many of our young people, some of whom were also directly involved in decision making and presentations to the commission, that makes this such a relevant, thorough and important document. Its findings are sometimes surprising, and occasionally make for sombre reading, but altogether provide both a useful summary of the commission's findings and a practical tool for ensuring the future safety of young people in Tower Hamlets.

Our approach

The commission into the Public Safety of Young People in Tower Hamlets is composed of elected members of the Council and a range of Children's Services partners. These partners include representatives of the Metropolitan Police, Crown Prosecution Service, academics, community groups, senior council officers and religious organisations.

To help enable the commission understand the nature of the problem of youth crime and safety, and make recommendations that will help tackle the problems, key stakeholders and decision makers from within the borough and further afield were called as witnesses.

The commission ran over six sessions between 3rd October 2008 and 11th December 2008. Each session had a distinct theme, and witnesses were called according to their area of expertise. For the purposes of lucidity, some statements have been moved to the most relevant sections and their evidence summarised.

The six sessions were chaired under the "Chatham House Rule", which enables the free sharing of information and a guarantee of anonymity: ***"When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed"***.

Membership of the Commission

Cll Lutfur Rahman, Leader + Chair

Cll Clair Hawkins, Deputy Chair

Cll Abdal Ullah

Kevan Collins, Director of Children's Services

Alex Kuye, Deputy Young Mayor

Faiza Mukith, Deputy Young Mayor

Abdi Hassan, Ocean Somali

Sally Bentley, Head of Thames Youth Magistrates Bench

Toks Adesuyan, Borough Crown Prosecutor, Tower Hamlets

Margaret Barker, GOL/Home Office

Professor John Pitts, University of Bedfordshire

Reverend Houston, Bethnal Green Mission Church

Hira Islam, Council of Mosques

Chief Sup Paul Rickett, Inspector Stephen Manger, Inspector Steve Kennedy (Metropolitan Police)

Commander Dave Sharman, Commander Bruce Epsley (Fire and Rescue Service)

Joanna Gaukroger, Principal, Tower Hamlets College

Joan Murphy, Poplar HARCA (Housing Association)

Crime in Tower Hamlets: what's the reality?

Box quote

"I've never had trouble, but me and my friends just stay near – we don't go far. Even on the bus, after school, you have to watch it. I don't think no-one would help."

14 year-old

The first commission session took place on 3rd October 2008 under the heading: *'What is the scale of concern for young people's safety within the borough?'* and set itself the task of establishing the extent of the problem of youth safety in Tower Hamlets. In order to examine whether the perception of crime is worse than the reality, witnesses were called from the front line organisations who deal with the aftermath of anti-social behaviour and violent crime.

By far the greatest cause of public concern is knife crime. There is a widespread belief – encouraged by some elements of the media – that many, if not all young men carry weapons and are prepared to use them.

Tower Hamlets has often been under the spotlight in media coverage about violent crime, and anecdotal evidence suggests many people in London believe the East End to be one of the most dangerous areas of the city. However, the reality is that knife crime is still relatively low in the borough. A surgeon from the Royal London Hospital provided a unique perspective on violent crime here in Tower Hamlets:

"The Trauma Unit treats major trauma injuries – that is, injuries which are life threatening or limb threatening, admitted via helicopter or ambulance. One third of patients come from local catchment areas, including Tower Hamlets. In 2004 we saw 10 young people up to the age of 18 with severe life threatening injuries, caused by stabbing. Last year, there were 32: and this year (up to end September 2008) there are 37. Often (being stabbed) leads to permanent disability. These are not Tower Hamlets figures, we only know figures where the victims lives/from where the ambulance 'call out' is made. Trauma in general, and penetrating injuries, is a young man's problem. Overall, in terms of fatalities London is a safe city; in the media there is a lot of focus on young people dying, but there are also young people who are stabbed and rendered permanently disabled. There is little evidence of repeat stabbing. The injuries are not more serious due to weapons type, rather according to intent. There are recurrent themes: mostly, wrong person wrong time, essentially school pupils usually picked on. They are essentially normal kids that get into this situation, though it takes a while to break down "adults-and-kids" barriers.

"We have a duty to prevent not just cure. We have spoken to local schools, though you have to be very careful as research indicates that shock tactics don't always have the desired effect: it can have a backlash.

“There is a postcode effect, but it is the postcode in which the parents of these victims grew up. The groups which need targeting are the teenagers and five year olds who are potentially at risk; and those people who are about to have children.”

Commissioners found this evidence very persuasive. These are “essentially normal kids” who are seriously hurt, physically and psychologically. There are patterns as to where the crimes are committed. Most disturbingly, this witness emphasised that patterns of perpetrators related parental attitudes, and aspirations; that anti-social behaviour in young people was more common where the children’s parents had been raised in poverty.

Commissioners became very interested in the links between a prosperous and a safe community as part of the strategy for safety.

It appeared that direct links to gang-related crime in Tower Hamlets was lower than in similar Inner London boroughs. According to statistics released by Tower Hamlets Partnership, the borough is 18th highest out of 33 for violence and 22nd highest for robbery.

Despite these encouraging figures, the public perception is that crime in the borough is both rife and increasing. As well as fighting crime, therefore, it’s important to tackle misconceptions around crime and gangs.

It’s too easy to blame the media alone for the widely-held belief that our streets are dangerous. In fact, in Tower Hamlets over the last five years violent crime in Tower Hamlets has fallen consistently. Sadly, however, the number of teenagers dying violently across the capital is rising.

Certain crimes are more “glamorous” than others; when a teenager is stabbed and that crime is linked to gangs it’s easier for some branches of the media to repeat stories about “postcode wars” and refer to loose associations of young people as gangs with exciting names rather than what they often are: groups of young people.

Tower Hamlets is a densely-populated borough, with a high number of over-crowded households. Young people tend to congregate on the street and this can make older people in particular feel insecure, even when the young people are just “hanging around”.

There are many reasons why young people like to hang out together. It’s important that they should not be seen as a problem when that’s all they are doing: socialising. However, large groups do tend to intimidate, whether intentionally or not, because people tend to act differently in groups. According to the University College London (UCL) report “guns, gangs & weapons”:

“There is a strong social science research literature which shows that individuals in groups behave very differently than they do when alone. They take more risks, they feel pressure to conform with the majority, and they feel less personal responsibility.” (4)

Within larger groups younger people often feel safer, and are more likely to commit crime. However, in groups they are at greater risk of being involved in violence (including becoming a victim) and of being arrested. As was

noted in the UCL's "Five Borough Alliance":

"Research on gangs – conducted in both the United States and the United Kingdom – consistently reveals that gang membership tends both to enhance offending and to facilitate offending. In other words, some individuals who previously engage in minor offending tend to engage in more serious offending after joining gangs; and some individuals start offending after joining gangs." (5)

According to a survey operated by the police and council (February 2007 – February 2008), 80% of young people feel safe at school. However, 50% said they feared gangs and groups and 50% feared anti-social behaviour and bullying. This report will examine the effectiveness of restorative justice, which is being used with increasing regularity in schools nationwide.

Box quote

"It's not enough to congratulate ourselves that there are fewer stabbings and gang problems in Tower Hamlets. Whatever the reality here, too many young people feel afraid. Unless we can find out why this is the case and ensure they can move around the borough not just being safe but *feeling* safe, we are failing our young people."

Kevan Collins, Director of Children's Services

One of the greatest problems within Tower Hamlets and across London is crime committed by young people against young people outside school and outside school hours, mainly on the transport hub. This often consists of young people being robbed of their mobile phones. There is a huge "spike" in crime at around 4pm.

In neighbouring Newham, the Youth Offending Team and British Transport Police (BTP) are taking part in a groundbreaking Youth Intervention Programme (YIP) aimed at reducing crime and increasing safety on the borough's trains and DLR system (buses are the jurisdiction of the Met). The YIP gives presentations in schools based on incidents that have been dealt with by the BTP.

Partly this multi-agency approach involves talking to young people about the dangers of the system itself; for instance, many young people are unaware that DLR tracks are electrified. The YIP is also looking at other measures to lessen crime, including staggering school closing times.

The issue of gang-related violence on the transport system, particularly to and from school and college, is an ongoing one. This is an issue that needs to be tackled urgently, partly to improve the quality of life for young people but also because the high visibility nature of this problem can provide a false perception of gang problems in the area.

Tower Hamlets in Context: What Works

Box quote

“Young people frequently say they feel unsafe travelling to other areas, yet incidents where young people are attacked are incredibly rare. We have to demonstrate to young people the vast difference between perception and reality – while doing everything we can to keep them safe, we also need them to *feel* safe.”

Joanna Gaukroger, Principal, Tower Hamlets College

The second Commission session took place on 14th October 2008 and focussed on how the experience of young people within Tower Hamlets experience compared with those of young people in other areas. The heading for commission 2 was ‘*what is the pan-London perspective: present and future resource implications?*’ A range of work was discussed, and the most effective shared an emphasis on information-sharing between professionals, involving the family, and focusing on reconciliation.

Witnesses were called who were able to provide a geographical and historical perspective on whether Tower Hamlets faces similar problems to other areas.

The most extraordinary aspect of the Tower Hamlets experience is that our gang problem is small compared to neighbouring boroughs, (figure 1). Our neighbours Newham, Hackney, Waltham Forest and, south of the Thames, the “Five Borough Alliance” (Greenwich, Croydon, Southwark, Lewisham and Lambeth) have higher crime rates and more gangs. The question is: why?



Figure 1: serious youth violence 2008: top 10 boroughs

The problem of gangs varies from borough to borough. The evidence seemed to show that Waltham Forest and Hackney have more generational gangs who have been around for a long time. In Newham there are more street gangs and the issues around dealing with postcode and territorialism. Within London the situation can be chaotic; within some areas there is more invisible crime committed. In some boroughs (e.g. Hackney and Newham) gangs operate at a more sophisticated level, sometimes leading to gun crime and fatalities.

At the moment Tower Hamlets is mainly territorial, but gangs from other boroughs do have an influence within the borough. The general age of members involved in street gangs is 15-20, and they are closely aligned with their postcode: many justify this as "defending their space". Gang members often form groups for protection, rather than being formed to carry out attacks.

So what lessons can be learned from other areas with similar and greater problems? A witness from a neighbouring borough which has been afflicted by gang crime related her experience:

"In our borough, in May 2008, there was the shooting of a young Somali, after which there was a view that we needed to target needs better. You need strategies to involve young people in decision-making and to design activities.

"We have identified gangs and began to use police intelligence and information from youth workers about particular names and associates. We also began building a detailed profile. Once we managed to identify the names we then created a situation to speak to these people and their parents.

"We had individual mini network meetings with the young people and parents in a school, and invited relevant partner organisations to the meeting, and set out plans for the young people and their families. In the context of the Somali community in particular, working with mums was paramount: finding out whether or not mums knew about their sons' involvement within gangs.

"The result of these meetings was that summer crime and violence figures dropped. 95% of the parents' response was positive. Only two sets of parents were resistant and didn't want to know; that's when we used housing as 'leverage'.

"We know that housing affects the safety of young people. Lack of housing is a risk factor. The Youth Offending Team has a named accommodation officer. However we used leverage in looking at their behaviour/compliance with programmes and the extent to which lack of co-operation would risk their council accommodation. We also looked at the issue from the other perspective of supporting young people: providing dedicated bed spaces, securing housing in their own right.

"We have a range of intervention programmes, there is summer university, PAYP, and programmes young people have provision to access throughout the year. We involve young people in the design of programmes and focus them towards targeted need areas."

Within Tower Hamlets, there is a problem with older gang members selling drugs to younger people. These groups have traditionally been hard to reach and harder to manage. We are seeing complex relationships develop between non-offenders, offenders, and adults.

Characterisation as a gang member can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. We need to be very careful about the language we use. Using the Islington definition, there are only two gangs in Tower Hamlets, and their identities are well known to the Youth Offending Team and police. However, there are a number of other gangs primarily based in neighboring boroughs who frequently operate in our borough.

It's a sad fact that many young people believe that they need to congregate in large numbers for what they perceive as "protection", especially when travelling. This report examines why this is the case. However, 1800 young people travel to and from Tower Hamlets College each day, for instance, and the actual number of cases each year are minimal, so it seems perceptions aren't always borne out in reality.

It is important to recognise that not every young person who carries a knife belongs to a "gang". Nor is a group of young people from the same neighbourhood who hang around necessarily a gang. As was remarked in "Building Bridges":

"...The situation in London has become so chaotic that someone can be at risk due to the postcode that they live in regardless of whether they individually affiliate themselves with the gang from that postcode. Rivalries can develop along geographical lines with or without gang involvement. The same applies to the sale of drugs. Simply assuming that all deaths are related to gangs, or that all gangs fit within a particular model is unhelpful and misses the vast number of young people who arm themselves or sell drugs but are not officially part of a gang." (6)

The issue of territorialism is a serious one. Despite evidence to the contrary, many young people believe that if they travel beyond their immediate neighbourhood they run the risk of being attacked. It is for this reason that some young people carry knives, albeit less frequently in Tower Hamlets than in other similar boroughs.

Projects like the Rapid Response Team (RRT), Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) and a focus on prevention and early intervention all contribute to keeping gang-related crime relatively low in Tower Hamlets. However, as we will demonstrate in the next chapter, many young people don't feel safe, particularly in other neighbourhoods within the borough. Why is this, and what can be done?

Feeling safe on the streets

Box quote

“The thing that most struck me about meeting so many young people from Tower Hamlets was their eloquence, their intelligence, the quality of their input. The media often portray all young people as jobs, but most young people care just as passionately about issues like crime – more so, because they’re so often the victim.”

Margaret Barker, GOL/Home Office

The third commission session took place on 6th November 2008 and listened to young people from Tower Hamlets as they described their experiences in the borough. The session was headed: ‘*Young people and their community – obstacles and solutions.*’

First – the good news. Young people feel safer at school in Tower Hamlets than they do in most other parts of the country. Schools are seen as “neutral” environments where young people from across the borough and beyond can mix and learn in safety. However, young people in Tower Hamlets feel more unsafe outside school than in most other areas. So what are the reasons for these starkly different figures?

Many young people within Tower Hamlets feel unsafe doing things that many older people take for granted – waiting for a bus, visiting the cinema, travelling within or outside the borough. This insecurity often causes young people to congregate in large groups.

The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) does see a disproportionate amount of trouble as groups use it to travel between areas. Free transport for under-16s has seen groups congregating on certain bus routes, particularly during school hours.

Young people have to travel through the borough and further afield in order to go to school, which means travelling into or through areas in which they feel vulnerable (being caught “slipping”). Consequently many travel in groups, and/or carry weapons as “protection”. Many young people assume that other young people carry knives, and so choose to carry a knife, exposing them to great risk of injury or imprisonment.

When consulting young people in the borough, the issue of travelling to and from school and college was one about which they had strong views and many suggestions for improvements. Proposals put forward by young people include staggering school opening hours, making uniforms less recognisable and re-drawing school allocation boundaries.

Within Tower Hamlets, there are a number of project initiatives that actively promote integration, respect and harmony between groups from different areas. Members of some of these organisations described their experiences to the commission.

“Tolerance in Diversity” unifies young people across postcodes through activities and trips. The young people involved were hand-picked by their teachers and asked to take part in projects which integrate “post-coders”. It was explained by the group how young people identify one another as being from another postcode. Identification has less to do with what people wear or how they behave than by whether they are familiar or not. “Strangers” in a district find themselves challenged – sometimes in a threatening manner – and this initial exchange sometimes leads to violence. This project helps to teach young people how to talk to others in a non-threatening way.

For projects like “Tolerance in Diversity” to work, young people need to be involved at a much earlier stage. By the time they reach their teenage years, young people may already begin to see people from other areas as a threat. More resources need to be invested in activities such as residential trips out of the borough to “neutral” locations.

The commission heard from “Tolerance in Diversity”, a project that specializes in tackling hate crime and discrimination. They visit schools and youth groups where they give a presentation and then ask for the view points and experiences of young people. They help each young person to identify a problem issue that’s relevant to them, and help them resolve it.

This project regularly recruits young people to join them as peer workers. During this time they receive training in handling social interaction situations. After a year of volunteering, peer workers can apply for paid positions with the project.

The main issues for safety for young people are different for every group. Tolerance in Diversity has dealt with issues of “turf wars” between Bengali and Somali groups and also with issues of teenage joyriding. They encourage young people to get feedback from the community about problem issues so they can begin to understand the other side of the conflict.

The work of Tolerance in Diversity is about empowering young people. Many problems arise from young people not knowing where they can and can’t be and what they can and can’t do; it’s important to get information to young people about these issues. Tolerance in Diversity mediates by listening to troubles and encouraging young people to talk them through and come up with a solution on their own.

The Commission also heard from the Aasha Project, a group which works with some of the most hard to reach young people involved in gangs and conflicts. As a senior manager explained, its team of dedicated staff along with network of volunteers from the community has helped to mediate, prevent and often resolve gang conflicts: “The Aasha Project discusses issues like conflict and violence with young people. Often the project works to resolve silly issues and misunderstandings, like perceived slights or someone misinterpreting another person’s look. We also look at conflict and safety, exploring the idea of ‘safety in numbers’, which helps create gang culture.

“One suggestion to dispel postcode related tensions has been a borough-wide football team work to dispel postcode related tensions. It might work, but on the other hand, something like that may just appeal to football fans. However, we rolled out a similar initiative with supervisors, which was successful. The activity would probably be more effective if it encouraged people to talk to one another.”

A common complaint among young people across the borough is that the police aren't always sensitive and respectful towards young people.

Box quote

“Sometimes the police just don't ask, they don't ask properly what's happened. They just look and it's trouble. Once we all got done. The police was just laughing and jeering.”

Teenager from a youth project

It was clear to the commissioners that there was a lot of very good practice, particularly from successful neighbourhood policing initiatives, but that continued training was needed. Good relations between the police and the community had to be worked at continually, they couldn't be taken for granted. This was particularly true of police coming into the borough from outside.

Referring to an example of this misunderstanding, at a community barbecue in July 2008, a young witness from the Aasha Project said:

“The police can make narrow-minded assumptions. They are intimidating, and that's why youth don't want to engage with them. A mechanism should be put in place between youth and police to foster a greater understanding.”

The police, however, reiterate that their number one priority is protecting people and preventing crime, particularly violent crime. That's why they are now working alongside young people and asking them for guidance on how best to stop and search people they believe are “up to no good”. The Met also oversee Operation Blunt, a cross-borough campaign that uses amnesties, educational programmes and other measures to discourage knife crime.

The responsibility for policing groups of young people is that of the police alone. Nor is their response to observing large groups untypical of the adult population as a whole. As has already been stated in this report, many adults are concerned when witnessing large groups of youths.

Although doing an excellent job, groups like Tolerance in Diversity and the Aasha Project mainly work with young people who are already on the cusp or already in trouble. The commission looked at ways to stop young people becoming involved in the first place, by early intervention and targeting potential problems. In the next chapter this report will look at groups that work with families to try to prevent problems later on.

Early intervention

Box quote

“Two rival gangs were engaged in conflict that left two members injured. One of these injured young people was not going to school for fear of the other. The Pupil Referral Unit resolved the conflict with a conversation and a contract of behaviour. Part of the contract stipulated that the boys would sit next to one another at the school assembly the next day. They did, and this dispelled not only the tension between them, but also the tension at the school.”

Dena Adams, Pupil Referral Unit

The fourth Commission session took place on 13th November 2008 and was headed: ‘*Best Practice to identify, prevent and intervene early?*’ Subjects up for discussion included identifying possible victims and instigators of crime and better parenting.

Many studies have been undertaken into young people’s behaviour and why they form and join gangs. Some join because they lack positive role models; some because they have experienced neglect at home; most come from relatively deprived backgrounds. The YJB’s report, “Groups, gangs & weapons”, noted:

“For all [gang members], their current involvement in group offending was the result of a gradual process which had often begun with anti-social behaviour at an early age. Progression to increasingly

serious forms of delinquency, however, did not occur evenly and might be triggered by a number of factors, including coming under the influence of a new set of friends and attempts to emulate older siblings and their associates, as well as the impact of specific distressing events in their personal lives. A common theme, though, was the influence of older males and some respondents cited the transition to secondary school as an important turning point.” (7)

Session 4 looked at ways in which children who could potentially become involved in gangs can be identified and helped to make the right choices early in life. Identifying children at risk and targeted early intervention can make an enormous difference later on.

One difficulty with this preventative approach is in targeting the “right” children: some children from happy, stable home lives, adult role models and relative affluence join gangs; others who suffer from all these factors never join a gang or get into trouble.

What seems certain is that early years are important in shaping the rest of children’s lives. By ensuring all children are given nurturing, safe environments in which to play and learn, and providing additional resources for those most at risk, relevant agencies can have a profound impact on behaviour.

In Tower Hamlets, the Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) support children at risk of becoming offenders of violent crime because they have an older sibling who is involved in gangs and violent crime. The YISP was established in 2003 under the Children’s Fund to help 8-13 year olds at risk, and has since been extended in Tower Hamlets to aid the 8-15 age groups.

Parents and children are usually referred to the YISP by the police as a result of anti-social behaviour, and occasionally by parents who have heard about the scheme from other parents. Referrals are also made through schools. The scheme is voluntary.

Box quote

“My dad was always yelling. I used to stay out. He’d always be on: you’re no good, your clothes, your talk. You’re no good at school. Now (X) comes in. I go out. My dad knows about it and he talks to (X). It’s better. I did music. My dad came and saw me.”

10-year old on the impact of his YISP key-worker

Parents whose children have been helped by the YISP were overwhelmingly positive about their influence. Often these parents are already at their wits’ end, and when it is demonstrated that the YISP is there to help and not to judge they listen to the panel’s advice.

The YISP organises trips for young people, who then begin to understand that the panel are there to help, and listen to their advice on how to stay out of trouble. The YISP also offers parents advice on how to deal with their children’s behavioural issues.

Over the last two years the YISP has worked with 316 children, of whom just 2% went on to offend. These 2%

have a particularly high incidence of having parents or siblings in prison, and/or drugs misuse problems. The YISP is now looking at ways to better target this hard-to-help group.

The Family Intervention Programme (FIP) was set up under the Government Prevention Programme to work with families who are considered hard to reach. FIP provides intensive intervention over six months. In Tower Hamlets the programme works with all members of the family rather than just the offender. The FIP take on the Lead Professional Role for families, negotiating for them with other agencies.

Although FIP works on the Sanction and Reward model, it has no sanctions or rewards in and of itself, and relies on partner agencies. FIP can work with families to spend small amounts of money, for instance to allow a parent to take a course that will increase their learning potential. The FIP works mainly with the Third Sector.

Established less than two years ago and funded by the DCSF, the FIP has been strongly embraced in Tower Hamlets, where a Child Poverty FIP has already been set up and a Baby FIP is being planned to work with pregnant women in difficult to reach families.

The FIP is in a good position to identify some of the problems faced by families and young people. These include disempowerment, low expectations of what kind of help people can get from services, isolation and negative support systems. There's a large turnover in council flats which contributes to a loss of community, debt, drug use, overcrowding and lack of places for young people to go where they feel safe.

The question of how and where children play is one that is increasingly being seen as important in how they develop as teenagers and adults. Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) encourages children to take part in unstructured play, rather than simply participating in video games or sport. Playgrounds can be an important place for positive conflict resolution.

PATH is particularly concerned with how the current furore about knife crime impacts on young people who may be traumatized by violence. Necessary inoculations and lessons in how to cope with life occur in play spaces, and this is where children learn to deal with conflict. Play spaces allow children to distinguish between "good" and "bad" affiliations.

The commission took note of a Stonewall report into homophobic bullying in schools, and noted that young lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual young people were x times more likely to be victims of bullying than their heterosexual peers. The Stonewall survey showed that "Almost two thirds (65 per cent) of young lesbian, gay and bisexual people experience homophobic bullying in Britain's schools.Of those who have been bullied, 92 per cent have experienced verbal homophobic bullying, 41 per cent physical bullying and 17 per cent death threats."

Dealing with bullying (including cyber bullying) is a key factor in order to deal with youth violence. Young people who are bullied, whatever the presenting cause, and very unlikely to reach their potential and to achieve the sort of positive social engagement Tower Hamlets wants for its residents. Young people who bully are most at risk of committing future criminal acts. Commissioners noted that an anti-bullying policy is being rolled out across the

borough and feedback on anti-bullying strategies provided to local schools. An anti-bullying helpline is being launched and cards given out to young people advertising the number. Commissioners considered this work to be central in the whole safety strategy.

Restorative Justice is increasingly being used in schools and other settings as a means of encouraging young people to take responsibility for their own actions and understand the impact their actions have on other people. Victims of bullying are given the opportunity to express how they feel to their bully.

Bullies are made to account for their actions and understand how their behaviour affects others. Under the terms of restorative justice, young people sign contracts that stipulate how they will behave in future.

The commission heard from the head teacher at a secondary school in E1 using restorative justice:

“Our school has a strict disciplinary code, including zero tolerance for weapons. A knife arch is used and students found with weapons are permanently excluded. When a child is found to be carrying a knife they are reported to the police. The school works with parents to find that child a placement in another school.

“Restorative Justice is used widely at our school. The system works extremely well because it forces parents to face up to the fact that their children can’t go on breaking laws. Since its introduction there have been zero instances of recurrence of problems between any two individuals.”

“Streets of Growth” is a value-led organization, working with kids aged 13-19 years old in career programs. The ethos of the organization is based around transitional coping. The program aims to help young people move away from negative situations and involves intensive case management, as a representative explained:

“Change is where conflict arises, so periods of change in the lives of young people are a major focus; safety is a key issue. There are three main thrusts to the approach of the program, Belonging, Harm, and Generosity.

“As an example, recently we dealt with a young man attending a local school who was involved in anti-social behaviour. The young man was expelled in Year 11. Streets of Growth had been working with this young man since he was 13 years old. On expulsion, he got sent to a PRU at which his gang involvement was raised.

“The young man explained that he’d been pulled into gang activity and hadn’t thought to resist, but when his education was taken away from him, he realised that he wanted to turn his life around. He tried to distance himself from his friends who were involved in gang activity, but soon found himself pulled back in.

“Streets of Growth worked with this individual to help him resist, and eventually he learned to turn his phone off when they called so they would be unable to contact him. However, this caused problems in his friendships and social standing. We then worked with him and his friends towards an understanding.

“The young man now has an internship as a plumber. It was a difficult journey, and he had to give up friends along the way, but he managed to get to a point where he got out of the situation while still retaining a sense of belonging in a community.

“We do a lot of street dance, this helps to create a positive gang phenomenon to cancel out the negative associations. We are specifically working with Bangladeshi boys around hesitancy in taking part in dance.

“You can never disband gangs – it’s in human nature to gather in groups. Group and gang culture is often seen as negative, but gangs aren’t innately negative – it’s all about your codes and ethics within the gang. There are so many definitions of gangs – there are groups, gangs, and affiliates of gangs.

“Gangs often revolve around territorial issues and a sense of belonging – this is why young people form postcode gangs. In actuality, wannabe gangs are more dangerous than established gangsters in that they are striving for something that isn’t in their current experience.

“We wouldn’t want to take away gangs, but we want to help young people to examine what they gain from a gang, and what they lose. It’s about exploring value systems.”

It should be recognised that the police are playing a major part in early intervention. They are involved in restorative justice; provide “intelligence-led” information which is linked into YIP and YISP; run the Police Cadets programme; and both Operation Curb and Operation Blunt aim to work with young people before they get in trouble. The police also liaise tactically with the YOT.

Tower Hamlets LAPs are currently engaged with over 12,000 young people. According to its area director, findings indicate that young people still associate themselves very strongly with territorial boundaries, and “negative perspectives” are held by the young people:

“There are questions of how parents and families can protect young people from crime, and where parents should go if their child is victimized. The key to involving youth is to engage with them in a way that they feel has positive ramifications for them. A flexibility of approach is vital.

“We need to be more creative about how we engage young people. We’ve tried to accomplish this by meeting with young people on their own turf and in their own timeframes. We’ve considered using video conferencing as a means of getting young people in different boroughs to communicate with one another.

“We need to build up support networks within our communities. Rather than having troubled individuals completely dependent on services, we need to get neighbours to support one another.”

So how do we get neighbours to support one another? In the next chapter this report will look at groups trying to build bridges – and break cycles.

Building bridges, breaking cycles

The fifth commission session took place on 25th November 2008 and was headed: *'The community's relationship with our young people – building bridges.'* Issues addressed included strengthening the links between the generations, the treatment of offenders in custody, licensing issues and problems on public transport.

One recurring theme during the course of this commission has been that the perception of lawless streets, rampaging youths and violent gangs is one held by many older people. Although the media must shoulder some of the blame, part of this fear is based on ignorance.

Older people tend to be intimidated by groups of young people, and there is often an assumption to believe they are "up to no good", even when they are just socialising. Partly young people congregate because they feel safe, and partly because it's fun; they often congregate on the street either because there's nowhere else to go or it's simply where they want to be.

A key factor in breaking down the fear of crime is to find ways for people from different generations to understand each other. Many older people are frightened of young people, often without reason; likewise, many young people believe older people are to be feared or unworthy of respect.

Box quote

"Young people need to be aware that it is the number one priority of the police to ensure their safety. If they come to us for help, we will help. Knife crime is something we can beat best by working together. Crime is already falling and that's a result of better and more responsive policing and the recognition that young people who carry knives are at greater risk of being imprisoned, permanently disfigured, or killed."

Chief Sup Paul Rickett, Metropolitan Police

The Commission heard from "Magic Me", a voluntary organisation that has operated in Tower Hamlets for over 25 years, with a mandate to bring together the generations. This group works with schools and youth groups and brings them together with social groups and day centres for older people.

Both young and older people who have participated in schemes organised by "Magic Me" have found it beneficial in many ways. Older people have found younger people jobs; younger people said it showed them that older people shared many of their concerns and wanted many of the same things.

According to one young participant, "the scheme enabled me to see my own teachers in a new way, and my education has consequently improved." Another said that "my relationship with my own parents has improved."

One older person said she felt much more confident going out in her community while another said that projects that bring together different sets of people can make an enormous difference in their community and the wider world.

Situated at the heart of the borough, and serving students from across the borough and beyond its boundaries, Tower Hamlets College has a unique perspective on real and perceived problems with gangs and crime. The

college's ethnic profile broadly matches that of Tower Hamlets as a whole, and with most students arriving on public transport violence in the surrounding streets used to be a serious problem.

A combination of strategies has vastly improved things both for the staff and students at the college and the wider community in the area surrounding the campus. A senior college representative explained:

"The college has a strong discipline procedure which has a profound effect outside campus. Exclusions are preceded by Final Warnings. Tower Hamlets College offers counselling for troubled students. The police Safer Schools Officers also offer reassurance to young people and parents.

"In addition, the Safer Schools Procedure installs metal detectors at intervals to root out weapons and uses knife arches without prior notice. When the knife arch was used no students were found to be carrying anything warranting arrest. Our schools and colleges are very safe environments, and knife arches are just one of several overlapping strategies aimed at keeping them safe for learning.

"A lot of time goes into working with the police and there are many leisure and extra-curricular activities on offer. The school has well-established guidance counsellors who are supported by student peer mentors; there is academic and vocational mentoring; and the college works actively with the parents or extended families of young people who get themselves in trouble, in order to resolve their behaviour."

Many young people who commit serious crime and anti-social behaviour are under the influence of alcohol. What can be done to tighten up the sale of alcohol to minors? The Commission heard from a council officer who works in licensing:

"In England and Wales there are 19800 licensed premises. When boroughs took over licensing the number of licenses granted across London decreased. In Tower Hamlets however, there has been a significant growth of licensed premises since 2005. This runs counter to the national trend.

"In addition, the sales in off-premise alcohol (purchased in off-licenses or supermarkets) have grown. It is thought that the recession will further aggravate this. The Government has new initiatives around responsible drinking, particularly with reference to cutting back on Happy Hours at pubs; however it's my opinion that until stricter laws are passed down governing the sale of alcohol in off-licenses and supermarkets, the Governments' new initiatives will only accelerate off-premise drinking.

"We have young police cadets that are used as mystery shoppers to root out establishments that will sell to those who are underage. Unfortunately it's very difficult to monitor underage drinking as most of the alcohol consumed by youth is obtained at home from parents or older siblings, not from illegal sales.

"It should be noted that young people drinking at home isn't illegal – it's only illegal to sell alcohol to them outside the home. The decision to prosecute has always been down to the discretion of the service. This raises the issue of responsible parenting.

“The Government’s view is that it’s not the responsibility of the Government to prevent underage drinking, but rather of the parents and families. The issues surrounding under-age drinking aren’t just to do with whether youth can purchase it, it’s about the degree of access they have to it from a variety of sources.

“The assertion that youth are getting alcohol from home might not be a relevant one for this particular borough due to the demographics. Many families in the borough have religious reasons for not purchasing or consuming alcohol. However, often older gang members or siblings are purchasing alcohol for younger gang members or siblings.”

Part of the reason young people drink and take drugs is because of boredom. A frequent complaint (and excuse) for teenage misbehaviour is that there is “nothing to do”. Yet Tower Hamlets is very well served by projects catering for young people. A representative of Brady Art Centre explained how art can divert young peoples’ energies into positive activities:

“Our centre hosts arts courses and workshops including dance, drama, music technology, fashion, film and singing. We have theatre space and gallery space for small exhibitions. Art can help channel young people’s energy in positive ways.

“We host regular sessions on Thursday evenings, and the rest of our outreach work happens through youth clubs. We have a small team – two full time equivalent workers. We ran 59 art projects with 13-18 year olds in 2007-2008.

“We run our projects through co-operation with the Rapid Response Team and the Children Looked after Service (CLAS). We also work in museums and galleries around the capital. We’re currently looking at running a program that will result in accrediting for youth who don’t have traditional GCSEs. We also work with awards from the Arts Council and the AQA Awards.

“Our focus is on projects that attract hard-to-reach young men. The projects encompass art forms such as film (we allow the youth to pick their own stories to tell), graffiti and street art, rap, and music technology.

“Transport issues are one of the things that limit the amount of young people that can access our services. There is a mobile bus service run by the Rapid Response Team – we could do with more services like this.

“A key way we’ve found to engage with youth is to hold competitions where the prizes are sought after by young people, such as Play Stations, but the concern with this method is that it may not lead to repeat engagement by youth.

“Community cohesion is a concern, but we don’t work as much with young children or parents. We do, however find that processions and shows are a good way to involve the wider community. A lot of people think youth are a threat or a nuisance, but our work helps their voices to be heard.

“We often come across young people who feel they’ve got nowhere to go, but in fact this isn’t accurate, as they have places to go, but simply do not want to go there. Transport is definitely an issue – we could get more youth

to the centre if we had transport. I feel that youth provision has been rather poor up until now, but this is now being addressed.”

Lessons learned, further actions

Box quote

“Restorative justice is proving an incredibly effective way to help young people confront their own actions. It’s not just about improving poor behaviour; the emotional literacy of young people is developed, both bullies and the bullied express their feelings, and responsibility for finding a way forward is down to those involved rather than a third party.”

Sally Bentley, Head of Thames Youth Magistrates Bench

The sixth session of the Commission took place on 11th December 2008 and was headed: “*Resources and the 3 year strategy for the Council for safeguarding our young people*”. Subjects up for discussion included restorative justice within schools and the work of organisations like the New Destiny Trust.

The Commission heard evidence from the authors of a report into gang related crime in Islington. LBI’s Commission on Young People’s Services and Safety was set up to determine the extent of knife crime in the

borough and also looked at gun crime. The commission came about as a result of the death of a 14 year old boy which attracted national publicity.

Islington Council's Integrated Strategy was to focus on youth violence and gang prevention, youth disorder, integrated services for young people such as positive activities for young people, information and guidance. The strategy also looked at parenting and family support and other strategies such as Mental Health Strategy.

The resources used to achieve these recommendations included the Youth Engagement Team, which focused on police officers and youth workers with an ability to engage young people; the Gang Exit and Disruption Team, made up of outgoing members of gangs; and the Parenting Supporting Service.

A major problem when it comes to dissuading young people from joining gangs is that the lifestyle of a "gangster" is seen as glamorous to some young people. One way to dispel this notion is to invite former criminals who have been to prison to talk to young people in a school or youth project setting to speak about their experiences and warn of the dangers involved in such a lifestyle.

During an earlier session of the commission, the work of Southwark-based New Destiny Trust was presented. The project is focused on ex-criminals and gang members telling their stories to young people, usually within secondary schools, who are opinion-formers or have been identified as being on the borderline of crime.

Two members of the commission were selected to go and witness the New Destiny Trust "in action" as an example of best practice. Here are their findings:

"The New Destiny Trust uses carefully vetted and selected long-term ex-prisoners, whose aim is to deter young people from joining or condoning all forms of gang culture, knife and gun crime, and antisocial behaviour (including bullying, drugs and alcohol).

"They do this by identifying with the sharp edge of crime through personal testimonials (building credibility with their audience), explaining to the young people present the brutally unpleasant realities of prison life, and how they should avoid becoming involved with criminal or borderline criminal activity.

"Suitable staff are carefully selected for this type of work, which is as much about passion and conviction as it is about paid employment. All staff are CRB checked at the highest level, they undergo 'be safe' training, and then more detailed training in role play, tackling sensitive issues, dealing with pupils' questions (however frank and personal), and their own personal presentation skills.

"The work takes a number of forms – addressing school assemblies, PHSE lessons, small group work, and where appropriate, mentoring. A favoured method is small group work. The project currently works within one school in Tower Hamlets, and they are keen to expand. Funding comes from a variety of sources including the Police, Councils and individual schools, but remains a key area of anxiety.

"We observed a 1.5 hour session with a group of Year 9 pupils (13-14 years old) at a school in South London. The session we witnessed was in a low level disruption class. The men gave a very effective presentation – the

students were spellbound. The students could relate to their language and behaviour - the men used street language, without swearing.

"The session handled why people form gangs and people gave reasons such as friends and protection. We were impressed by their credibility, their positive impact on the students, and by their ambition for these young people to change. The session was very effective and the students asked when the men would be coming back."

The commission is keen to promote organizations such as the New Destiny Trust and expand their role within the borough. Illustrating the horrors of life inside is one effective way of enabling young people to think hard about their actions and the possible consequences.

Young people are only ever locked up as a last resort. Those young people who become wrapped up within the justice system need more help when in custody and more support when they are released so that they don't re-offend.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has three main objectives: to reduce offending, to ensure public protection and to ensure better outcomes for young people in custody. YJB also works with The London Crime Prevention Board, formed by the Home Secretary and the Prime Minister. YJB was developed to focus on Restorative Justice for Young Offenders, prevent anti-crime extremities and organize programs.

Currently the YJB is looking into the establishment of a brand new secure accommodation centre in East London. The "East Potential" Academy would provide complete support for young offenders, all within a single setting, close to the communities in which the young people grew up, as a witness explained:

"The YJB is looking at overcoming the legal and financial issues of East Potential's bid, and there are a number of other issues that we must address. For example, it's not always the best option to bring first time offenders into custody together with those with multiple convictions, as they have different needs.

"In order to support the YJB in tackling crime & safeguarding young people, local authorities can play an important role. First, we would like them to address the way in which they respond to crime in schools and colleges. Secondly, youngsters in custody could get better resettlement procedures through better electronic information as it can be hard to engage with offenders.

"Finally we would prefer that the Courts don't send young people to custody on short prison sentences (117 days and under) because what can be achieved in that period to attain nominalization is limited."

Summary

Box quote

"A great deal of crime is taking place which we as adults never notice. Young people are often living in fear and it

is our responsibility to them to both ensure they can go about their lives in safety and also that they realise adults and the community are *on their side.*”

Toks Adesuyan, Borough Crown Prosecutor, Tower Hamlets

In order to combat anti-social behaviour and violent crime, the Commission has compiled a list of recommendations that will have a real impact both on levels of crime, and the perception of crime, within Tower Hamlets.

There are no short-term or easy solutions, but what is certain is that these problems can only be tackled using a multi-agency approach: education, employment, schools, community support, parents, health, housing, safeguarding, police, youth service, licensing, all must play a part and all must be pulling in the same direction, ensuring resources, information and experiences are shared.

There is some confusion nationally about whether knife crime in particular is getting better or worse. Statistics can be used in many ways and the commission has relied on them only where they are both unambiguous and illuminating. Otherwise we have focussed on what has been learnt and what can be done.

Young people need to be educated as to both their rights and their responsibilities. They need to be informed what's acceptable, what's unacceptable, where they can and can't go.

Having listened to submissions from the YISP parents and from the social inclusion teams about bullying, it became clear that, for young people, safety begins at home, and then extends into schools and the streets. The commission commended a dual approach

- “Think Family” – encouraging the approach of strengthening families, and keeping the family at the heart of service delivery (the YISP and FIP were both good examples, so was a lot of the work in schools)
- Restorative Justice, which over time brought together victims and perpetrators to break down barriers and combat received impressions.

A key theme that came up time and again during this Commission was the complaint that there simply aren't enough places for young people to go, particularly during the evenings, weekends and holidays. Many youth centres close down around 9pm, and often young people don't want to go home because of overcrowding. However, some within the commission believe that youth clubs can often exacerbate tensions and certainly don't provide a complete solution.

We believe that the infrastructure is well embedded to deliver positive change for our local communities: but the challenge is to develop the vision of “One Tower Hamlets” where young people value their community, and the community supports young people to fulfil their optimum potential.

Rates of exclusion from school are lower in Tower Hamlets than in most boroughs. The link between exclusion from school and gang membership is well documented, as was noted in “Groups, Gangs & Weapons”:

“The majority of young people excluded from mainstream said they had carried a knife within the last year.” (7)

Education needs to be more relevant to the young people it serves. Young people need to be educated better as to their rights and their responsibilities. More resources need investing in young people with learning or behavioural problems. Young people need to be shown other routes to a successful and happy adulthood. New technology can have a detrimental impact on how young people behave. Where once fights took a lot of organising, giving those involved time to cool down, now mobile phones mean back-up can be summoned almost instantly.

Similarly, the emergence of social networking sites (YouTube, Bebo, Myspace, Facebook etc) makes it much easier for gangs to boast about their own notoriety; this has a self-sustaining impact. At the same time, more young people (even those from relatively modest backgrounds) are now carrying mobiles, iPods etc, and are easy prey for muggings.

One driving force of much of the crime both in Tower Hamlets and elsewhere is drugs. By taking illicit drugs young people immediately become part of a sub-culture, isolate themselves from mainstream society. Even “soft” drugs like cannabis lead young people into difficult situations, forcing them to mingle with dangerous criminals.

The reasons why young people take drugs are complex: boredom; peer pressure; because drug provides temporary relief from their lives; and (in the beginning, at any rate) drugs can feel good. We need to demonstrate that there are other ways to alleviate boredom; that saying “no” to your friends is a sign of strength; that the world is full of possibilities; that drugs often lead to alienation, poverty, ill-health, criminalisation and death.

One of this Commission’s findings has been that some young people have actual or *perceived* problems travelling to other areas. The “postcode problem” seems over-stated, and even within the Commission some believe that the only young people who have real problems moving freely around the borough are those who are up to no good. On this, as with many subjects (the usefulness of knife arches, for instance), there is a healthily divergent range of opinion.

What most of the Commission did agree on was that the problems around gang culture and violent crime are mainly to do with young men. According to the UCL report, “guns, gangs & weapons”:

“Gangs are mostly male. Although school surveys suggest that just as many girls as boys claimed to be part of a gang, such gangs were not ones with a territory or name. This suggests that girls may be more involved with peer group collectives than street gang-level collectives. The literature supports this with little evidence to support the speculation that female involvement is increasing. Where females are involved in gang activities, it is thought their role might be one of support, such as carrying or storing weapons.” (4)

Though some other boroughs have female gangs, this is not a real problem in Tower Hamlets. However, young women are often the victims of gang-related violence.

Another recurring theme has been the dearth of suitable adult role models, particularly male role models for teenage boys. Parents need more support if they feel their child is out of control. More case workers need to be recruited for groups like the YISP. Restorative justice should be promoted so long as there is evidence it works. And more resources need to be invested to support 18-25 year olds moving out of youth services. These are just a few of the many recommendations that make up this report.

Although Tower Hamlets is safer than other parts of London, just as there is a danger in overstating the problem, there is an equal danger in understating the case.

As adults we sometimes forget there are two worlds. Crime in the younger world could involve two youths and an adult onlooker would not know a crime was taking place: a mugging could be occurring but to the untrained eye the young people are just "messaging around".

This low-level crime, unseen or unnoticed by most of us, is affecting young people all around us every day. We should all do our utmost to ensure that young people grow up free from fear, free to travel and enjoy childhood. If this Commission helps bring that about, then all the sterling efforts put in by all the witnesses, young people and Commission members themselves will have been worthwhile.

Recommendations

Having received and heard evidence from various sources, the commission is confident that Tower Hamlets offers a very good environment in which most of the residents, most of the time, can live and learn safely and happily. The recommendations from the commissioners address the exceptional circumstances when young people are at risk, and the environment is less secure.

The recommendations below represent the broad thinking of the commissioners, in response to the evidence presented. Against each recommendation we have referenced the sessions from which these were principally drawn, but we should emphasise that conclusions are not mutually exclusive, and recommendations emerge from evidence received throughout the process. The next tier of recommendations will be expressed in the action plan drafted by officers, and contained in the borough's youth justice and community safety plans. Commissioners ask that the relevant sections within these plans should be highlighted so that progress can be easily monitored.

1. One Tower Hamlets

Commissioners noted that there was a disparity between the image and the reality of safety in the borough. In particular, the reputation of young people and the quality of community relations suffered from sensationalist reporting in some newspapers and television programmes. As a result there was a danger of a culture of fear developing, between cultures and generations. Commissioners were convinced that we should counter this with positive reporting and celebrating the successes in the borough. We must value

distinct cultures in the borough, drawing together young people and adults, and helping young people from different ethnic backgrounds to mix easily. We should:

- Ensure young people's representation to feed into local structures charged with preventing and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, in particular the crime and drugs reduction partnership. (Sessions 3, 4)
- Promote and fund inter-generational working in the borough (Session 4)
- Promote and fund work across ethnic boundaries
- Develop and encourage volunteering schemes for the Olympics, where young people and adults work closely together (Sessions 3, 4)
- Endorse positive action schemes for young people (Session 2, 3, 5)

2. A Great Place to Live

Commissioners want to promote a sense of belonging, and confidence in the out-door environment. A further example of the disparity between popular belief and evidence is the relatively high fear of crime when actual crime has fallen over the last 7 years. This anxiety, however, can lead to heightened tension. Significant anecdotal evidence was presented by young people about post-code tensions, and there was some evidence of street fighting across boundaries.

We should:

- Narrow the gap between perceptions and the evidence and avoid the vilification of young people (Session 1, 3, 6)
- Encourage the Police Authority to identify ways of strengthening the relationship between the police and young people (Sessions 1, 3, 6)
- Ensure resources are directed towards early intervention/family projects (e.g. YIP, YISP & FIP). (Session 2,4, 6)
- Promote the value of Play within the borough, and improve playgrounds and parks to encourage, safe, imaginative and inclusive play. (Session 4)
- Focus support for young people on the transition period between the end of primary, and the start of secondary school (Session 4)
- Encourage young people's mobility across the borough, continuing to develop safe routes to school and to play, particularly when moving between areas and postcodes (Sessions 1, 3, 5,)

3. A Prosperous Community

Much evidence was presented to demonstrate that full engagement with educational and leisure activities, and familiarity local democratic processes, militated against individual anti-social behaviour, encouraged reporting, and increased public confidence. Young people and their families prospered when they were actively engaged in their community and confident in dealing with public affairs.

Engagement with the rich learning experience provided inside and outside schools and colleges was seen as central to full social engagement. Commissioners were clear that promoting educational, artistic, sporting and

cultural opportunities within the borough would divert many young people from poor behaviour and under-achievement. We should:

- Ensure a broad range of high quality activities within youth centres, and secure specialist programmes, as necessary, to re-engage young people who are in difficulty. (Sessions 2, 5)
- Include a strong focus upon the arts and creative projects for 'hard to reach' groups (Session 5)
- Through the 14 – 19 strategy, ensure young people have every opportunity to improve their skills levels (in particular social & communication skills) to prepare them adequately for training and work (Sessions 2, 5)
- Provide good accommodation, support, and training or employment for all young people leaving custody, in line with the local re-settlement pledge (Sessions 5, 6)

4. A Safe and Supportive Community

Commissioners found that for some young people the borough did not always offer a positive environment. Evidence of girls and young women becoming victims of prostitution was presented clearly, and special services were indicated in this area. Commissioners were particularly impressed with evidence (from the police, schools, and a number of third sector organisations) on the use of Restorative Justice across agencies as a key model of working with young people.

Commissioners want to ensure that every effort is made to sustain a safe environment in which young people can live and thrive.

We should:

- Draft a protocol on the use of restorative justice across the borough and identify resources for central training at initial, intermediate and advanced levels. (Sessions 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Try new approaches to diversion whereby ex-offenders work with young gang members to de-glamorize crime and divert these youngsters (Session 2)
- Support young people to resist bullying in and out of school, linking with anti-bullying policies and restorative justice, as above. Raise awareness of the policies and encourage their effective implementation. (Sessions 3 & 4)
- Prioritise early intervention strategies and positive engagement of families, in particular working with families of young offenders, and with children in families with adult offenders (Sessions 2, 4 & 6)
- Ensure an accurate information exchange between agencies and up-to-date protocols (Sessions 1, 2, 6)

5. A Healthy Community

The Commission heard compelling medical evidence on serious injury, and the lifelong effects, both physical and psychological. The Consultant Trauma Surgeon at the Royal London Hospital presented his perspective of a 'parental postcode': those children raised in poverty may be less likely to adequately safeguard their

own children, and this cycle perpetuates. The commission warmly welcomed the offer from the trauma unit to develop close liaison with the authority.

Evidence from licensing and the drugs specialists influenced thinking in particular on the availability of alcohol in relation to public order and petty crime. The supply of illegal drugs was a concern both in relation to health and as an introduction to criminal networks. We should:

- Implement the borough's strategy for the Reduction of Child Poverty (Session 1)
- Establish the link with the trauma unit. (Session 1)
- Provide more information to young people about knife crime and its consequences (Session 1)
- Improve the disclosure between the police and NHS around knife crime injuries (Session 1)
- Increase intelligence sharing and positive partnership working in order that the evidence that the supply of drugs to young people is significantly reduced (Session 4)
- Target the known criminal gangs in the borough, and focus on the families of those young people known to associate with the gangs. (Session 2, 4, 6)
- Look at ways of ensuring licensees, parents and older siblings are held to account for an unchecked pattern of underage drinking (Session 5)

Acknowledgments

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- Andy Newsam, Youth Justice Board
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- Chloe Newman, Southwark Council (Community Safety)
- Cyril Jackson school parents
- Daniel Taegtmeyer, Lifeline
- Diane Peters, Streets of Growth
- Dinar Hossein, Tower Hamlets Youth Service
- Dr. Rob Ralphs, Researcher at Manchester University on Youth Gangs
- Gilly Cottew, Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)
- Gordon Sturrock and Eleanor Image, Play Tower Hamlets
- Graham Robb, Jo Brennan (YJB)
- Heather Mallinder, Tower Hamlets Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
- Hub Travel Report

- Jackie Barnes, 'Globe Town Action Zone'
- Liz Vickery and Liam McQuade, CAF and Behavioural Support
- Luke Roberts, Lambeth RJ co-ordinator and colleagues from PRU
- Mohammed Shahazan and parents from Youth Inclusion Support Panel
- Nick Yard, London Ambulance Service
- Nikki Bradley, Family Intervention Panel
- Officers from Operation Ashford
- Peer Mentoring Project 'Tolerance and Diversity'
- Peta Boucher, Leap Confronting Conflict
- Phil Leyland, Head Teacher at Bishop Challoner School
- Professor Karim Brohi, trauma surgeon and lecturer
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- Susan Langford and Katherine Gilfroy, 'Magic Me'
- Sylvia Merton and Nick Steward, Tower Hamlets College
- Thanos Morphitis, Peter Murphy, Peter Moore, LB Islington
- The Commission would particularly like to thank all the young people who attended and gave such impressive evidence at Sessions 3, 4 & 5.

References

1. Tower Hamlets Residents Panel Consultation report (March 2008)
2. "Equality Impact Assessment of the Home Office Youth Crime Action Plan" (DCSF, July 2008)
3. LB of Islington's Commission on Young People's Services and Safety (March 2008)
4. "Rationalisation of current research on guns, gangs and other weapons" (UCL, November 2005)
5. "Five Borough Alliance: Guidance for the Communications Strategy" (UCL, August 2007)
6. "Building Bridges Project: Executive Summary" (ROTA, July 2008)
7. "Groups, gangs & weapons" (Youth Justice Board, 2007)

Further reading

"2020 Vision" Tower Hamlets Community Plan

Summary of Youth Crime Action Plan (July 2008)

The Hub Report: Learner Travel: to facilitate 14-19 pathways & Borough wide Campus April 2008

Translations

If you need this document in large print, braille, audio format or your own language please contact:
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Agenda Item 8.2

Committee: Cabinet	Date: 8 th April 2009	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 142/089	Agenda Item:
Report of: Corporate Director – Kevan Collins Originating officer(s) Kamini Rambellas Service Head – Children’s Social Care		Title: Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children’s Board Annual Report 2008/9, Business Plan 2007/10. Summary of Lord Laming’s report and outcome of Serious Case Review evaluations Wards Affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report will firstly set out the work that the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) has undertaken since it reported to Cabinet in late 2007, presenting the Board’s Annual report to Cabinet.
- 1.2 The report also includes information concerning the Board’s response to the Joint Area Review which has included a recent independently facilitated review and stock take of the LSCB arrangements together with recommendations for the future. This review had been planned in advance of events in Haringey in late 2008, but as it took place early in this year, was able to take account of some emerging themes.
- 1.3 In response to the events in Haringey, The Secretary of State requested that Lord Laming undertake a further review of safeguarding arrangements. Lord Laming’s report was published on March 12th 2009. This report will advise Cabinet of the implications arising from Lord Laming’s report and the LSCB’s immediate response to it.
- 1.4 The report will also report on the evaluations of the Serious Case Reviews undertaken by LSCB since April 2007.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Note the contents of the LSCB annual report and business plan and outcomes arising from LSCB ‘stocktake’.
- 2.2 Note the summary of Lord Laming’s report.

- 2.3 Agree to appointment of an independent chair of the LSCB.
- 2.4 Note that the appointment will be made by the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Council's Board partners.
- 2.5 Agree that the Council should support appointment of an independent chair by the LSCB for any future serious case reviews.
- 2.6 Note that a further report will be provided in relation to the full implementation of any changes arising from Government's response to Lord Laming's report. This will include proposals to support elected members in developing a greater understanding of the issues relating to safeguarding and their role and responsibilities in this area.
- 2.7 Note the outcome of the Ofsted evaluations of Serious Case Reviews undertaken in 2007-8.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2006 a paper entitled, '*Establishing a Local Safeguarding Children Board in Tower Hamlets*', was presented to Cabinet recommending that a Local Safeguarding Children Board be established in Tower Hamlets with effect from April 2006.
- 3.2 The report outlined the proposed structure, governance, and chairing arrangements, and the proposed scrutiny arrangement of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.3 In March 2007 the Director of Research in Practice facilitated the first meeting of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.4 In December 2007 Cabinet agreed and approved the proposed changes to the structure and Governance arrangements for the Safeguarding Children's Board.
- 3.5 In July 2008 the Department for Children, Schools and Families published its 'LSCB Challenge and Improvement Tool'. This was followed in October 2008 by the ministerial announcement of the terms of reference for a planned stock take of LSCB's.
- 3.6 Tower Hamlets LSCB subsequently commissioned a further independently facilitated review of Current LSCB arrangements.
- 3.7 In November 2008 the events concerning the death of child 'P' in Haringey became public and the Secretary of State ordered an immediate inspection of safeguarding arrangements in Haringey. He also requested that Lord Laming undertake a review of current arrangements for the safeguarding of children.
- 3.8 The Secretary of State wrote to all Directors of Children's Services in December 2008 advising them of the outcome of the inspection of Haringey and that he had taken steps to put in place a new Director of Children's Services and an independent chair of Haringey LSCB. He also requested that all Lead Members, DCS and LSCB satisfy themselves concerning the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.
- 3.9 The Tower Hamlets LSCB review took place in January 2009.
- 3.10 Lord Laming's report was published on March 12th 2009.

4. LSCB ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9

- 4.1 The LSCB Annual Report (Appendix1) summarises the work and achievements of the board in 2008/9. These have included:

- Creation of the Tower Hamlets Child Death Overview Panel
- Implementation of All London Child Protection Procedures
- Safer Recruitment Training rolled out to partner agency and voluntary sector
- Positive evaluations of Serious Case Review evaluations
- Dissemination of learning from Serious Case Reviews through multi-agency workshops
- Commissioning independent research of safeguarding Issues for BME Communities
- Successful LSCB Annual Conference on Domestic Violence
- Working with our Communities:
- Working with Muslim Families
- Increased safeguarding knowledge of faith & community groups through training, events and identifying emerging issues
- Empowering religious leaders to take forward safeguarding activities
- Held 4 Continuing the Dialogue seminars which inform future priority areas but also create a platform for hearing community views on safeguarding issues
- Successful conference on safeguarding issues for African children
- Delivered programme of seminars to enhance practice and knowledge in relation to safeguarding issues

4.2 Responding to the Joint Area Review

4.2.1 In April 2008, Tower Hamlets was subject to a Joint Area Review, which sought to understand through inspection the quality of services for children and young people in the Borough. Children Services were scrutinised as part of this process. Included within this was consideration of safeguarding arrangements and governance.

4.2.2 The work of the LSCB was considered as part of this review and inspectors judged that Tower Hamlets safeguarding arrangements were considered to be 'good'. It highlighted a number of strengths but noted that links with the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements [MAPPA], the body that monitors and manages sexual offenders, needed improving. It also stated that the LSCB needed to strengthen

its monitoring role of partner agency wider actions and its accountabilities. It has been agreed that MAPPA will convene a specific event to explore the safeguarding implications and how they may be held to account for this.

4.3 LSCB Members Pack

A Members Pack has also been produced which fully explains the role and function of the Board but also includes a 'job description' which explicitly states what is required from each member representative to ensure their effective contribution to the work of the Board.

5. THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN: A PROGRESS REPORT

5.1 The report was commissioned by The Secretary of State in his letter to Lord Laming of 17th November. Lord Laming was tasked with addressing three key questions which were, in summary:

5.1.1 What good practice has been successfully achieved in safeguarding children since the publication of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry report?

5.1.2 What are the key barriers, including in the legal process, that may impede efficient and effective work with children and families and that may be preventing good safeguarding practice from becoming standard practice?

5.1.3 What specific actions should be taken by Government and national and local agencies to overcome these barriers and accelerate systematic improvements?

5.2 The report was published on the 12th March 2009 and made 58 recommendations covering the areas of Leadership and Accountability; Support for Children; Interagency Working; Children's workforce; Improvements and Challenge; Organisation and Finance and Legal issues.

5.3 Lord Laming confirmed his view that integrated services and a focus on the Every Child Matters outcomes for children is the right context in which to deliver child protection services. Lord Laming has underlined his message that safeguarding is everybody's business and that the Leader, or Elected Mayor and Chief Executive should provide an additional layer of scrutiny and support for the Director of Children's Services. The recommendations include the following;

- Chief Executives and Leaders need to satisfy themselves that DCSs and their teams are adhering to processes.
- The role of the Director of Children's Services
Recommendations: NCSL programme key to development at the top.

DCS must have somebody with a social care background as a senior in their team to run the work and ensure safeguarding

- LSCB chairing will "move towards independence over time". The chair of the Children's Trust should not chair the LSCB.
 - LSCBs to account to Children's Trusts
 - Serious Case Review Panel Chairs and Overview authors must be independent of the LSCB
 - Serious Case Reviews and their inspection will concentrate better on practice and lessons learned not process.
 - The report endorses the Social Work Taskforce. Social work training and ICS, are to be focus for real serious and prompt work for the SW taskforce (See appendix 2)
 - Children's Trusts will be required to report annually on state of the nation and there will be targets in LAAs on safeguarding
 - There will be a national safeguarding advisor and unit, within DCSF
 - DCSF to revise Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - Ofsted to improve its expertise in Safeguarding
 - The Ministry of Justice to commission an independent review of the impact of court fees.
 - DoH to prioritise its commitment to recruitment of Health Visitors; promote the statutory duty of GP's to comply with child protection legislation and develop national training programme for the children's health work force
- 5.4 In response to Lord Laming's Report, the LSCB now seek to recruit and Independent Chair of the Board. The Board will require that the appointed chair has significant and substantial senior experience in the area of children's safeguarding. All future Serious Case Reviews will also be chaired by an independent person (not the chair of the Board).

6. EVALUATION OF SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS

- 6.1 Ofsted assumed responsibility for the evaluation of Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) on the 1st April 2007. The framework for how these evaluations would be undertaken was not made available until several months later. Since that date Tower Hamlets has submitted 4 SCR's for evaluation. Two of these (relating to the children MR and EWF)

were reported to General Purposes in late 2007. The remaining two have yet to be published or reported to members at the specific request of the Metropolitan Police due to ongoing criminal investigations, they have however been submitted for evaluation.

- 6.2 MR concerned an incident in 2006. The young person, placed in residential school by LBTH, sexually assaulted 7 year old child while staying at family friends while on w/e contact. Ofsted judged the SCR to be Adequate.
- 6.3 The case of EWF concerned a child who died in February 2007. The father of E killed mother, then died also (probable drugs overdose) E died as a consequence (dehydration) at 5 months. Ofsted judged the SCR to be Good.
- 6.4 The case of M who died in August 2007, concerned a young man in care, who was stabbed in a drug related street fight by an unknown perpetrator. Ofsted judged the SCR to be Good.
- 6.5 The final case concerned the child S, a 7 year old on CPR for neglect found in highly neglected state by MPS, multiple bruising to head and body. The child did not sustain life threatening injuries but the LSCB decided to undertake a Serious Case Review nonetheless as S had been subject to a Child Protection Plan when he sustained the injuries. The evaluation of this case is anticipated imminently and will be reported verbally to Cabinet.
- 6.6 Ofsted now publishes quarterly reports on the evaluations of Serious Case Reviews. To date, 208 have been evaluated and the majority of Serious Case have been judged either Adequate or Inadequate with on average, less 25% receiving a good judgement, none have been judged to be Outstanding. The evaluations of the Tower Hamlets submissions are, within this context, positive.
- 6.7 A number of changes have been implemented as a consequence of learning from Serious Case Reviews. These have included; the creation of Independent Reviewing Officers for Children in Need, rolling programmes of multi agency training to disseminate key practice learning and awareness of issues such as the impact of Domestic Violence on children and more recently, the development of a rolling programme of training for staff on working with perpetrators.
- 6.8 The Joint Area Review commented very positively on how well learning from Serious Case Reviews was embedded.

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 This report advises Cabinet of the work that the Tower Hamlets' LSCB has undertaken since 2008, including the actions following the Joint

Area Review and there are no financial implications for the current and future financial years.

- 7.2 Further, it advises Cabinet of the immediate action that Children's Services intends to take as a consequence of the Laming Report on the protection of children, namely the appointment of an independent chair of the local LSCB and ensuring all future Serious Case Reviews are chaired by an independent person. It is anticipated that the cost for these roles will be approximately £50,000 per annum, which will be contained within the current Children's Services Budget.
- 7.3 A further report will be presented to Cabinet in relation to the full implementation of any changes arising from the Government's response to the Laming Report, which will also contain the full financial implications of the actions the Local Authority is required to take.

8. **CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)**

- 8.1 Cabinet is asked to authorise appointment of an independent Chair to the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board ("LSCB").
- 8.2 The LSCB is established under section 13 of the Children Act 2004 and carries out its functions in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006.
- 8.3 Pursuant to regulation 4, the Authority which establishes an LSCB shall, after consulting their Board Partners appoint a person to chair the LSCB. The proposal to appoint an independent Chair is one which is open to the Cabinet.
- 8.4 The functions of the LSCB are set out at regulation 5 and these are reported on in the attached annual report. It is appropriate for the Council to receive a report on these functions.

9. **ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

The report supports One Tower Hamlets by developing our approach to ensuring all children are appropriately safeguarded at all times

10. **SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

None

11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

These are contained within the body of the report

12. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

12.1 This is contained within the comments of the Chief Financial Officer

13. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 LSCB Annual Report and Business Plan

Appendix 2 Secretaries of State letter to Chair of S/W taskforce

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of “background papers”

Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.

The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=HC+330>

Kamini Rambellas – Service Head Children’s Social Care – Tel: 020 7364 2213

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Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board

Annual Report 2008-09



▪ **EDUCATION** ▪ **SCHOOLS** ▪ **CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE** ▪ **HEALTH** ▪ **POLICE** ▪
COMMUNITY SAFETY ▪ **PROBATION** ▪ **YOUTH JUSTICE** ▪ **DRUG & ALCOHOL**
SERVICES ▪ **NSPCC** ▪ **ADULT SERVICES** ▪ **DISABILITY SERVICES** ▪ **HOUSING** ▪
VOLUNTARY SECTOR ▪ **YOUTH & COMMUNITY** ▪

Introduction

The information contained in this report has been written for both professionals and members of the public, including parents, carers and the children & young people of Tower Hamlets. Care has been taken to ensure the information is presented clearly and comprehensively, with professional 'language' avoided wherever possible.

The report sets out the work Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board [LSCB] has undertaken in the previous year (2008-09). It also highlights key developments in Safeguarding that will inform the additional areas of work the Board will need to address.

The LSCB devised a 3 year Business Plan which has been developed to fit alongside the Local Authority's Children and Young Persons Plan. The Annual Report acts as a review of the overarching plans and gives an update of the priorities for the coming year.

Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board

The Safeguarding Children Board in Tower Hamlets has been in place for almost 3 years (April 2006) and has been strengthening what it aspires to achieve by working together with key agencies that have a legal responsibility for keeping children safe from harm and help them and their families to **stay safe** whether at home or in the community they live in.

The LSCB consists of representatives from a range of agencies, both voluntary and statutory, who are working with children and young people or their families in the borough of Tower Hamlets. A list of the agencies can be found on the title page.

The main duty of the LSCB is to ensure that there are adequate or proper arrangements across all agencies to protect children from harm but the LSCB is also tasked with making sure the welfare of the child is promoted.

Key Developments & Achievements in 2008-09

This section lists some of the main achievements but information detailing a review of progress can be found in the 3 year Business Plan at the end of this document.

Child Death Overview Panel

All LSCB's were required to have systems in place to review child deaths in their area of responsibility by April 2008. The purpose of this was mainly to learn lessons from these deaths especially when a child dies unexpectedly. The knowledge gained could then inform the response needed from public service or in policy development. Tower Hamlets formed a Child Death Overview Panel [CDOP] which meets every 3 months to review the reasons why children have died. Guidance on how panels need to gather and report their findings has been issued by the London Safeguarding Children Board. A 6-month update report has been presented to the main Board, with early indications that a smaller number of children have died in Tower Hamlets

in comparison to other areas, majority have been related to natural causes or accidental death. Those that did not meet either of the two reasons are fully investigated. The CDOP is still developing and the LSCB has identified an Administrator to support the work. It will remain a priority of the LSCB to ensure that findings are responded to in an effective manner.

Child Protection Register / Children Subject to Child Protection Plans

The Child Protection Register was phased out in April 2008 as it was considered unnecessary by the Government as individual electronic case files were available on each child. Children are now referred to as being 'subject to a child protection plan'. The thinking behind this was that it would help agencies and professionals working together to focus on the plan to protect the child and whether it meets their specific needs. No other changes were made to the child protection process. A leaflet was produced for professionals to communicate the impending change and placed on the LSCB website. Tower Hamlets also wrote to all children and their parents who were affected by this to explain the changes. The LSCB has undertaken an audit of all children who have remained subject to a plan for more than 15 months and also reason for some children being 're-registered' under the categories of abuse.

Safer Workforce

New Government Guidance was introduced regarding safer recruitment practices and dealing with allegations against professionals working with children. Tower Hamlets has for sometime now had in place a Local Authority Designated Officer who specifically deals with such allegations and collates data to monitor patterns developing in the Borough. An audit of safe workforce practices was carried out by each LSCB member, this highlighted a need to standardise practice across the agencies so Tower Hamlets children can expect and benefit from the same high safeguarding standard from whichever agency they come in to contact with. Training on safer recruitment practice has been delivered on a rolling basis. Immediate priority was to ensure all relevant school staff were trained by September 2008. Since then, the training has been opened up to other Local Authority staff and LSCB agencies, including the voluntary sector. Further Guidance has been recently issued on Vetting and Barring staff (Jan 09) and this will be incorporated in to the ongoing developments of a safe children's workforce in Tower Hamlets and will remain a priority in the coming months. The LSCB has funded CRB checks for 100 Imams and religious educators as part of its campaign to improve safeguarding standards within faith and supplementary education settings.

London Child Protection Procedures

The 3rd Edition of the London Child Protection Procedures was launched in 2007 following an extensive consultation period, which Tower Hamlets contributed to. The LSCB ensured hard copies of the guidance was purchased and made available to all agencies, including the voluntary sector. A number of additional procedures have been developed since then, following another period of consultation. Tower Hamlets LSCB has taken part in reviewing the Domestic Violence, Young People affected through Gang Activity and Child Death Review Panel Procedures. The Safeguarding Children abused through Domestic Violence Procedure was officially launched in June 2008. Plans are in place to ensure the LSCB offer training support as and when further guidance are published.

Evaluation of Serious Case Reviews

The Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance issued in 2006 clearly defined when and who should conduct a serious case review [SCR], in summary this is usually when a child dies as a result of abuse or sustains serious injury and where lessons for inter-agency working can be made. The decision is made by the LSCB area the child lives in. In the past year Tower Hamlets LSCB has concluded one serious case review and contributed to another lead by a different LSCB. A further 5 other cases were considered but did not meet the threshold for a full review. The inspecting body, OfSTED announced they would evaluate all serious case review for process and quality of reports; unfortunately they were unable to issue guidance prior to many LSCB's commencing their SCR's, including Tower Hamlets. Despite this, the judgement OfSTED reached on the 3 SCR's from the previous year concluded we had attained 'good' ratings for 2 SCR's and 'adequate' for another. In context of national trends, this is above average especially as fewer 'good' judgements are being reached and none have been judged to be 'outstanding'.

Improving Referrals to Children's Social Care

The LSCB identified the need to clearly communicate to all how, when and what levels of concerns regarding children and young people should be referred to Children's Social Care. The LSCB commissioned the 'Guidance on Threshold for Referrals to CSC' and this was disseminated to all agencies and placed on the LSCB website. The impact of this is monitored by CSC and reported to the main Board

Inspection & Scrutiny of Safeguarding Work

In April 2008, Tower Hamlets Local Authority was subject to a Joint Area Review, which sought to understand through inspection the quality of services for children and young people in the Borough. Children Services were scrutinised as part of this process, in particular its safeguarding arrangements. The work of the LSCB was considered as part of this review and inspectors judged that Tower Hamlets safeguarding arrangements were considered to be 'good'. It highlighted a number of strengths but noted that links with the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements [MAPPA], the body that monitors and manages sexual offenders, needed improving. It also stated that the LSCB needed to strengthen its monitoring role of partner agency wider actions and its accountabilities.

LSCB has since invited MAPPA to discuss the recommendation and agreed MAPPA would convene a designated event to explore the safeguarding implications and how they may be held to account for this. In relation to the need to strengthen partner agency responsibilities, the LSCB held a development day to explore this further and come up with some solutions.

A Member's Pack has also been produced which explains the role and function of the Board but a 'job description' explicitly states what is expected from each member representative and this has now been signed up to. The LSCB Forward Plan has been created to assist in the monitoring of agreed actions and subsequent reporting by all agencies. The LSCB has further increased its scope for scrutiny. The Board continues to receive Children's Social Care Management Information Data which it rigorously interrogates resulting in the instigation of a number audits which have include one to ensure that child protection plans are robust and appropriate.

In the past year, the LSCB has been involved in the London Dataset Pilot (phase 1 & 2) which will mean it can compare itself against other London Boroughs. The management information report will be revised to include the ability to incorporate data from external partner agencies, a suggestion which emerged from the LSCB development day.

Improving knowledge, standards and working together

The LSCB has responsibility for ensuring their representative agencies workforces are equipped in safeguarding knowledge, specifically child protection; that its standards of working together measures up to a quality group of child protective service. Over the past year, the LSCB has conducted its first annual safeguarding conference on Safeguarding Children abused through Domestic Violence. The result has led to the agreement to train a number of key staff members across each agency in the use of the Domestic Violence Risk Matrix to be used as a tool to evidence concerns. These champions will be required to cascade the training within their own agency to ensure we attain a collective practice standard for assessing levels and identifying escalation of risk when working with families living with domestic violence. The LSCB has also continued to roll out its annual inter-agency training programme and will continue to build on this in the coming year to include newly identified safeguarding issues e.g. safeguarding children online and in the digital world. A new model to training delivery was adopted and will be implemented next year utilising a pool of experienced practitioners and managers from across the LSCB to deliver the training programme.

Working with faith and community groups

This area of work has been particularly successful in increasing the safeguarding knowledge of faith and community groups through a structure engagement process. There has been a real shift in the partnership moving away from awareness raising towards empowering religious leaders to take on board responsibility as primary influencers. Engaging the community has been achieved through a number of methods. For example, the LSCB has held 4 seminars with the Muslim community entitled 'Continuing the Dialogue' this is a progression from the 'Beginning the Dialogue' programme of events held in the preceding years. Such topics as parental mental ill health, domestic violence and young women at risk of sexual exploitation were covered this year. An interesting development has been the first women's only seminar targeting Muslim women parenting 2nd/ 3rd generation children. Each seminar elicits the opinions and priorities from the community's viewpoint and informs future work area and direction. Listening and following through with tangible actions and results has ensured the LSCB has an effective relationship with our minority communities who significantly feature in our Child Protection, Children Looked After and Children in Need Statistics. Consequently, the LSCB has commissioned Coram Families to undertake a research of safeguarding issues for Black, Minority, Ethnic Communities in response to emerging patterns suggesting 'under' and 'over' representation within CSC data. It hopes to learn why this might be the case and so take remedial action to balance any practice, referral or service response implications. Other achievements have been the publication of the Mosque and Madrassah Safeguarding Handbook in Bengali and Somali, followed by a similar bespoke document for the African Churches.

Strengthen LSCB monitoring and accountability arrangements:

The LSCB will need to continue to implement the suggestions from the Development Day to improve the accountability of partner agencies, including links with MAPPA and monitor its effectiveness.

Review of LSCB work streams:

The work remit of the LSCB has grown considerably due to national developments but also as a result of its own local successes. It will be necessary to review the way in which it can perform at its optimum to deliver a comprehensive and achievable safeguarding agenda.

Child Death Reviewing Processes:

The Child Death Overview Panel will need to continue to embed itself in practice through guidance and learning. A review and analysis of the first 18 months data will need to take place. The related Serious Case Review Process will be reviewed to incorporate learning from previous experience to enhance the current system and develop a local inter-agency protocol.

Multi- Agency Training Coordination:

The multi-agency model for training delivery will require dedicated coordination to ensure it is successful in its primary objective to have a well informed workforce in place. A training coordinator post will be recruited to join the LSCB team.

E-Safety:

An LSCB E-Safety Strategy is to be mandated by the Board in order to implement wide-ranging activities including awareness raising and training amongst children & young people, parents, carers and professionals to ensure children remain safe from the dangers posed by the virtual world.

Enhance Safeguarding arrangement with the Voluntary Sector

LSCB relationship with Voluntary Sector suffered as a result of the Community Organisation Forum ceasing to exist. This body acted as the access point to reach the many voluntary organisations working with children & young people. Collaborating with the new DCSF commissioned Safeguarding Unit for the Voluntary Sector will assist the LSCB to re-establish its relationship and devise a programme of activities, including safer recruitment practice/training.

Safer Workforce:

There is a need to continue the Safer Workforce agenda in light of the recent Vetting & Barring guidance.

Services to faith & community groups:

Findings from the BME research will need to be analysed and considered, especially where safeguarding can be extended to include children from the newer or 'hidden' communities.

Implications from Laming Report:

Finally, the recent publication of Lord Lamings 2nd Report titled: **Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report** will need to be carefully considered and recommendations factored in to the 2009-10 priorities, this will include the need for independent oversight and chairing of Serious Case Reviews and possibly of the main Board as well.

How is the work of the LSCB Achieved?

To ensure that the LSCB is able to meet the legal duties placed on them; it decided it would have 3 layers within its structure to undertake the work it needs to do. Firstly, there are 8 sub groups which do the detailed work and leads on specific areas.

These are:

- Children & Domestic Violence Subgroup
- Child Death Overview Panel
- Case Review Subgroup
- Training Subgroup
- Prevention, Protection & Practice Subgroup
- Performance & Quality Subgroup
- Policy & Practice Subgroup
- Engaging with our Communities Subgroup

Secondly, the Executive Board manages the day to day responsibilities to ensure a well facilitated forum is maintained. Finally, there is the main Board which is made up of senior managers who can make decisions on behalf of the agencies they represent and able to influence and contribute to the safeguarding agenda.

The LSCB is currently supported by a Coordinator who manages the work plan, priorities and facilitates a smooth running Board, supported by dedicated administrator. A second administrator supports the work of the Child Death Overview Panel and Serious Case Reviews.

Funding of the LSCB

The LSCB is jointly funded from financial contributions made by a number of agencies namely Health, Police and Children's Services. The budget covers the cost of the LSCB staff team, funds independent authors of serious case reviews, research, audit, the training programme and specific activities from each of the subgroups e.g. publication of information material, upkeep of website, seminars etc.

Financial Reports are provided quarterly to the Executive Board for monitoring and twice a year to the main Board in tandem with budget planning cycles. Financial contributions are agreed by November of each year in order to make arrangements to meet LSCB targets.

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

	Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
1.	<p><i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will continue to consolidate its core function through effective business management and support.</i></p>	<p>1.1 A 3-year strategic forward plan (2008-11) will be developed.</p> <p>1.2 Annual LSCB sub-group work plans detailing key activities and outputs will be reviewed and put in place to implement the strategic business plan.</p> <p>1.3 An LSCB Annual Report will be produced and disseminated to reach main stakeholders including communicating local need, response and progress to the public domain.</p> <p>1.4 The LSCB Budget will be regularly monitored and reviewed, including agency contributions. Financial reports will be presented to the Executive Board.</p> <p>1.5 The Main Board will meet at least 6 times per year.</p> <p>1.6 The Executive Board will meet at least 6 times per year. It will oversee the day to day business of the Board, including a decision making schedule.</p> <p>1.7 An independent organisation will be commissioned to evaluate the LSCB.</p> <p>1.8 Membership and attendance across the 3-tiers of the LSCB organisational structure will be regularly</p>	<p>April 2008</p> <p>Annual (April)</p> <p>Annual (June)</p> <p>6 monthly</p> <p>Bi-monthly</p> <p>Bi-monthly</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Review undertaken to incorporate overarching objectives in to subgroup work plans</p> <p>2nd LSCB Annual produced</p> <p>Quarterly budget reported to Executive Board and twice a year to main Board</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Completed Action. Timescale brought forward.</p> <p>Membership attendance recorded and monitored at Executive Board.</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
	<p>reviewed to strengthen and extend representation of the professional safeguarding community.</p> <p>1.9 An LSCB Induction Pack will be developed to support new members in understanding their role and responsibility.</p> <p>1.10 LSCB will be fully prepared for Joint Area Review and implement subsequent recommendations.</p>	<p>May 2008</p> <p>2008 & 2011</p>	<p>Information provided to agencies undertaking own cross-monitoring exercise.</p> <p>Achieved but further developed in to Members Pack containing signed agreement & job description.</p> <p>LSCB subject to 2008 Joint Area Review and recommendations implemented with 6 month timescale</p>
<p>2. <i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will communicate effectively with its key stakeholders through a range of mediums and considered formats.</i></p>	<p>2.1 A 3-pronged Communication and Information Strategy will be developed to promote the work and key messages of the LSCB across statutory, 3rd Sector and the public.</p> <p>2.2 The LSCB Website will be re-developed to become a meaningful information platform to reach both professionals and public.</p> <p>2.3 A decision will be made each year as to whether publicity and events will be held during National Child Safety Week (held in June).</p> <p>2.4 An LSCB Newsletter about the LSCB will be produced for staff across partner agencies.</p>	<p>May 2008</p> <p>July 2008</p> <p>Annual (January)</p> <p>6 monthly</p>	<p>Outstanding Task</p> <p>LSCB Website information updated regularly. Website redesign delayed but underway.</p> <p>Exploration of proposal for E-Safety to feature during Child Safety Week underway.</p> <p>Outstanding. Activity linked to communication strategy</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
<p>3. <i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will uphold its accountability through transparent systems and integration through local; regional and national bodies.</i></p>	<p>3.1 All sub-groups will report and raise issues for consideration with the Executive Board.</p> <p>3.2 All Sub-groups will regularly submit reports to the Board to update on its progress and identify key issues as agreed with the Executive Board.</p> <p>3.3 Reporting systems will be in place to ensure the LSCB is regularly updated on Management & Performance Information to assist planning and to prioritise strategic responses.</p> <p>3.2 Tower Hamlets LSCB will contribute to the development of a Pan-London Dataset. Comparative performance information will be presented to the Board.</p> <p>3.3 The LSCB will establish formal links with the Domestic Violence Forum & Violent Crime Action Group (VCAG) Strategic Body.</p> <p>3.4 Written submissions will be made by the LSCB to respond to Government Consultation and Guidance Documents and will consider local implementation.</p>	<p>As identified</p> <p>As Identified</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>2008</p> <p>Dec 07</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Achieved. Standing Agenda item at every Executive Board</p> <p>Combination of verbal and written reports provided to main Board</p> <p>Children Social Care Management Information Report tabled for discussion at every main Board</p> <p>Contribution to Phase 1 of pilot Achieved. Decision to continue involvement to Phase 2 and findings to be shared with Board</p> <p>Achieved. Children & Domestic Violence subgroup created reporting to both LSCB, DV Forum and VCAG</p> <p>Contribution to Consultation undertaken via relevant subgroup e.g. Additional Safeguarding Procedures on Domestic Violence, Young People affected by Gang Violence including Govt Forced Marriage/3rd Party Reporting consultation</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
	<p>3.5 The LSCB will work closely with 'Stay Safe' (CYPSPG) to identify, monitor and evaluate key local safeguarding priorities.</p> <p>3.6 The LSCB Business Planning Process will establish links with other key planning processes to ensure Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare of Children remains a centrally integrated component.</p> <p>3.7 Representation will be maintained at the London Safeguarding Children Board Forums.</p> <p>3.8 Consideration will be given to how best to proceed with the LSCB being subject to a formal scrutiny process.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>As identified</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>April 2009</p>	<p>Priorities to safeguard young people at risk of sexual exploitation and from dangers in the digital world adopted in Stay Safe priorities for 2009-10.</p> <p>Ongoing process of involvement & inclusion.</p> <p>Representation from Tower Hamlets at LSCB Chairs, Development Officers, Child Protection and Child Death Overview Panel Chairs meetings where opportunity to influence London agenda and share/promote local practice achieved.</p> <p>LSCB Report tabled for April 09 Council Cabinet meeting, Inspection by Joint Area Review in April 08 and quality of Serious Case Review Process evaluated by OfSTED (4 completed and 2 expected in 2009-10)</p>
<p>4. <i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will build and support effective partnerships to raise awareness through research and prevention initiatives.</i></p>	<p>4.1 Local Communities and the Voluntary Sector will be made aware of the need for safeguarding children together.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Substantial partnership and support offered to faith leaders (Muslim / African Churches) to bridge safeguarding collaboration with these communities.</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
	<p>4.2 A Generic local publicity strategy will be in place to ensure safeguarding services and resources are signposted through range of effective mediums.</p> <p>4.3 Safe recruitment practice, process and publicity will be in place to assist parents to select community educators within the home.</p> <p>4.4 Bangladeshi Child Protection Video will be updated and reproduced to support safeguarding activities.</p> <p>4.5 Pertinent local issues and prevalence of safeguarding children and young people will be identified and given strategic response/resources.</p>	<p>September 2008</p> <p>March 2008</p> <p>June 2008</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Outstanding as linked to Communication Strategy. However, key information accessible on LSCB website and distributed via intermittent electronic mail shots</p> <p>Decision made to not take activity forward. However, information imparted through Safeguarding Training with Mosques and Muslim Parents Groups</p> <p>Original CP video transferred to DVD format and used at Safeguarding Training with Mosques and Muslim Parents Groups</p> <p>Prevention subgroup identifies issues and signposts to relevant subgroup to take forward e.g. young girls at risk of sexual exploitation lead to a seminar on the subject which identified a number of tasks including need to raise awareness amongst Bangladeshi parents. A Children Social Care (CSC) lead working</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

	Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
		<p>4.6 Strategies and initiatives aimed at minimising risk or preventing abuse will be identified and supported.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>group explores the issues further and acts as an intelligence sharing forum to instigate planned response</p> <p>Prevention subgroup identified concern in the practice of male circumcision by non-medically trained practitioners and anecdotal link with impact on health services when procedures go wrong. A study of this is currently being undertaken by CSC and the Primary Health Trust. Findings and recommendations will be presented to main Board</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will promote Early Intervention and Effective cross-agency Protection Strategies.</i></p>	<p>5.1 The LSCB will respond to the Draft All London Domestic Procedures and implement plans when final version available.</p> <p>5.2 Domestic Violence and Safeguarding of Children will be robustly integrated in to the LSCB work plans to raise knowledge and standards.</p>	<p>December 2007</p> <p>As identified.</p>	<p>Achieved. LSC contributed to consultation of the procedures and adopted them locally. Hard copies of the 3rd Edition made available to LSCB partner agencies, including Voluntary Sector organisations</p> <p>Achieved. Children and Domestic Violence subgroup established and has developed a comprehensive work plan to raise knowledge and practice standards through training, policy and procedure</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
	<p>5.3 Practice and Policy implications relating to the Care Matters White Paper will be identified, including contributions from partner agencies to facilitate implementation plans.</p> <p>5.4 The LSCB will identify key safeguarding implications for Tower Hamlets Children & Young People in the lead up to the 2012 Olympics through research and analysis.</p> <p>5.5 The LSCB will work with neighbouring Boroughs to ensure a safeguarding agenda is incorporated in to the Olympics Strategy.</p> <p>5.6 The LSCB will work with Partner Agencies to develop a local E-Safety Strategy that sets safeguarding standards and incorporates an awareness raising campaign to educate children and their parents.</p>	<p>September 2008</p> <p>September 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p> <p>December 2008</p>	<p>Achieved.</p> <p>Range of safeguarding issues and implications for services identified at consultation day hosted by London Safeguarding Children Board</p> <p>London Safeguarding Children Board leading on this work and Tower Hamlets LSCB contributing to influencing agenda</p> <p>Outstanding Task. Strategy now developed and tabled for LSCB main Board sign off in May 09</p>
<p>6. <i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will ensure all children & young people in the locality are Safeguarded through Diversity Practices.</i></p>	<p>6.1 An Annual Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken and shortfalls will be addressed and met through reviewed sub-group work plans.</p> <p>6.2 The LSCB will identify 'hidden' or emerging diverse minority groups in Tower Hamlets and will provide evidence of inclusion in its strategic Safeguarding plans.</p>	<p>Annual (March)</p> <p>January 2009</p>	<p>2007-08 Equality Impact Assessment completed</p> <p>Research of safeguarding needs of BME communities commissioned. Scope includes identifying emerging or new communities. Report on findings & recommendation tabled for May 09 Board meeting.</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
<p>7. <i>Tower Hamlets LSCB will raise the Standard and effectiveness of its Workforce.</i></p>	<p>7.1 LSCB will ensure it has appropriately trained staff across a multi-disciplinary workforce.</p> <p>7.2 An inter-agency safeguarding conference will be held each year; themes will be linked to current developments.</p> <p>7.3 All London Child Protection Procedures will be implemented.</p> <p>7.4 Staff will be made aware of the Procedures and Protocols through a communication & training strategy.</p> <p>7.5 All local Protocols will be reviewed to ensure congruence with the London Child Protection Procedures e.g. Forced Marriage, Sexual Exploitation and Information Sharing Protocols.</p> <p>7.6 Organisations, including voluntary Sector will be made aware of the concept of Common Core Assessment.</p> <p>7.7 The local 'Professional Differences' arrangements will be reviewed to take in to account of the London CP Procedures & Working Together 2006.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>December 2007</p> <p>March 2008</p> <p>September 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p> <p>June 2008</p>	<p>LSCB inter-agency training programme offered annually</p> <p>Achieved. First Annual Conference took place in June 2008 on Domestic Violence & Safeguarding Children, timed to launch and adopt the London Child Protection Procedures' new Domestic Violence Guidance</p> <p>Achieved. Series of Workshops arranged within individual agencies & incorporated in LSCB Safeguarding Training</p> <p>On going task. Awareness raising arranged by training subgroup to ensure multi agency learning and dialogue takes place</p> <p>On going review.</p> <p>On going strategic approach employed to achieve this objective</p> <p>Presented to Board. Further review of arrangements to be undertaken in light of new developments.</p>

LSCB 3 Year Overarching Business Plan 2007-2010

	Objective:	Outcomes:	Timescale:	Progress Update:
		<p>7.8 All cross-agency Protocols will be reviewed to ensure children's needs are appropriately highlighted and met.</p>	<p>June 2008</p>	<p>On going task undertaken by policy & procedure subgroup</p>
<p>8. <i>LSCB will undertake Serious Case Reviews in a considered and timely manner and ensure learning is shared with relevant partner agencies.</i></p>		<p>8.1 Serious Case Reviews will be undertaken in accordance to Government Guidance (Working Together '06)</p> <p>8.2 Recommendations from single agency and LSCB reports will be implemented and monitored through the case review sub-group.</p> <p>8.3 Lessons from serious case reviews will be disseminated to improve practice.</p> <p>8.4 Cases where there have been inter-agency difficulties will be identified for review.</p> <p>8.5 Child Death Overview Panel will be set up and systems and resources will be identified to support its work remit.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>April 2009</p>	<p>Achieved but ongoing task. One serious case review completed this year and significantly contributed to SCR lead by another LSCB.</p> <p>On going task. Action Plans from previous years SCRs monitored until completion. New Action Plans incorporated in to monitoring process</p> <p>'Lessons Learnt' Workshops for 2 separate SCRs delivered to multi agency audience of practitioners and managers. Well received and evaluation indicated this model is useful and should continue</p> <p>Ongoing Task and responsibility of Case Review Group.</p> <p>CDOP established officially in April 08 and implemented. Guidance on how CDOP gather and report data implemented locally. Jointly funded CDOP Administrator post recruited to in March 09 and mid-point report on CDOP initial findings presented to main Board in Nov 08</p>



Moira Gibb
Chief Executive
Camden Borough Council
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

5 December 2008

Dear Moira

SOCIAL WORK TASKFORCE

Thank you for agreeing to chair the new Social Work Taskforce that we are bringing forward next week as part of the Children's Plan: One Year On package and the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy. This letter sets out the background to the establishment of the Taskforce and what we would like it to achieve.

The job social workers do is critical for the nation. They play an essential role in protecting children and young people from harm and in supporting people of every age. The work they do can be difficult and very demanding, requiring careful professional judgements that can make all the difference to those they serve.

Social workers are committed to their work and to the people they support. Thanks to that commitment, there have been some improvements in recent years in the quality of the services social workers provide.

But advice from the Expert Group on the Children and Young People's Workforce is clear that we now need to go much further. Their view is that significant change is needed to drive further improvements in the quality of professional social work practice and training, the status of the profession as a whole and its ability to attract and retain excellent and well-motivated people.

Action the Government has taken with its partners over the past ten years has resulted in substantial improvements in the quality of professional practice in teaching, as well as in the status of the teaching profession and its ability to recruit excellent graduates. We now need to take similar steps on social work.

The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy and the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy will set out the need for a long-term programme of reform

to support improvements to children, young people and adult social work. The objectives of the programme will be to:

- reform initial social work training;
- drive improvements in the quality of professional practice;
- attract and retain the brightest and best people to social work;
- strengthen the delivery system which supports and challenges professional social workers.

To inform this long-term programme, we would like the Social Work Taskforce to focus specifically on frontline social work practice and to recommend how in the light of their conclusions improvements should be made in social worker training, recruitment and leadership.

Specifically we want the Taskforce to look at:

- how professional social workers are deploying their time now;
- why they prioritise their time in the way they do;
- what support and supervision they receive and whether it is effective and fit for purpose;
- what actions and behaviours by professional social workers make the most difference to vulnerable children and adults;
- how to ensure there are the right number of social workers on the frontline to secure high quality services and support;
- what changes are needed to drive improvements in front-line practice.


We would like the Taskforce to begin work immediately in the New Year. The first step should be to establish a clear evidence base on these issues. It will be important to engage front-line social workers, their managers and clients as well as academics and training providers closely in this work. The Task Force's conclusions should be published and we would expect this to be done by the summer of next year.

The Taskforce will be established as a joint unit across the Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families to take forward work to support improvements in social work in the longer term. The unit will be staffed by professional practitioners and external experts, as well as policy officials.

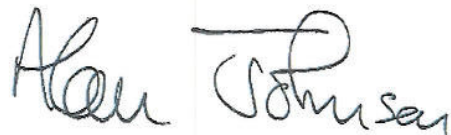
The work of the Taskforce will need to take account in particular of the findings of the forthcoming report on Safeguarding being led by Lord Laming.

We also recognise that more needs to be done to support Directors of Children's Services to lead an integrated workforce to deliver our important agenda. For that reason, we have also asked the National College of School Leadership to work with the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Children's Workforce Development Council to develop and deliver a programme to support and strengthen the leadership of Directors of Children's Services.

We are copying this letter to Andrew Webb, Director of Children's Services, Stockport and Bob Reitemeier, Chief Executive of the Children's Society who have kindly agreed to act as deputy chairs. I am also copying this letter to Maggie Atkinson, who chaired the Expert Group on the Children's Workforce.

Handwritten signature of Ed Balls, consisting of a stylized 'E' followed by 'Balls,'.

ED BALLS MP

Handwritten signature of Alan Johnson, written in cursive.

ALAN JOHNSON MP

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Agenda Item 10.1

Committee	Date	Classification	Report No	Agenda Item No
Cabinet	8 April 2009	Unrestricted	CAB 143/089	
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive		Title: Age, Race, Religion/Belief and Sexual Orientation Equality Schemes, 2009-12		
Originating Officer(s) Michael Keating, Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities Frances Jones Diversity and Equality Coordinator, Scrutiny and Equalities		Wards Affected All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the new draft Equality Schemes in relation to Age, Race, Religion/Belief and Sexual Orientation for 2009-12. The Schemes in full are attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree the Age, Race, Religion/Belief and Sexual Orientation Equality Schemes 2009-12, as set out in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets Council has placed diversity and equality at the core of its functions and is committed to maintaining the very highest level of equalities practice in relation to both employment and service provision. In 2006 the Council was externally validated as being at the highest level of the Equality Standard for Local Government (Level 5). The production of Equality Schemes in relation to Race, Disability and Gender has been an essential vehicle for maintaining this performance. Actions from these Schemes have fed into the annual Diversity and Equality Action Plan, along with activities relating to religion/belief, age and sexual orientation equality.
- 3.2 Our commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination is supported by a number of legal duties. However under current legislation, the requirements to address inequality and discrimination and promote equality vary between equality 'strand'. Since 2001 we have had a legal duty to publish an Equality Scheme for race and in 2006 and 2007 further duties were introduced to require us to produce Equality Schemes in relation to disability and gender respectively. We are also required to address discrimination against *employees* on the basis of all six equality strands, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religion / belief. The Council's Valuing Diversity Statement however makes it clear that we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and inequality exists for individuals and groups belonging to all of the six equality strands. The production of three new Equality Schemes in relation to Age, Religion/Belief and Sexual Orientation, along with the refreshing of the Race Equality Scheme, is intended to assist us to go beyond the requirements laid down in law to address all six equality strands and to do everything that we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote better understanding and respect between all people.
- 3.3 The forthcoming Single Equality Bill will replace the separate equality duties on public authorities covering race, disability and gender with a single equality duty, which will also extend to gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief. These new Schemes prepare the Council for the new legal obligations on local authorities arising from the duty to promote equality in these three areas.

4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW EQUALITY SCHEMES

- 4.1 In producing the Equality Schemes we have drawn on the '**Equality Measurement Framework**' developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The Framework is intended to assist public authorities in identifying inequality between individuals and groups of employees and service users. It is based on the idea of equality in the "central and valuable things that people can do or be". These are grouped into ten domains of equality:
- Life
 - Physical security
 - Health
 - Education
 - Standard of living
 - Productive and valued activities
 - Individual, family and social life
 - Participation and voice
 - Identify, expression and self-respect
 - Legal security

4.2 Within these domains, the Framework identifies three aspects of inequality:

- **Inequality of outcome** – that is inequality in the central and valuable things in life that individuals and groups actually achieve
- **Inequality of autonomy** – that is, inequality in the degree of independence people have to make decisions affecting their lives
- **Inequality of process** – reflecting inequalities in treatment through discrimination or disadvantage by other individuals and groups or by institutions and systems

4.3 In developing the Equality Schemes we analysed evidence of inequality between individuals and groups in the borough. Drawing on the Equality Measurement Framework categories the Equality Schemes offer a description of inequality which distinguishes between the inequality of access and outcome. For example we know that many new communities are less able to access public services as they may not be aware of the services that exist, may experience language barriers and may not be eligible for some services. To ensure that we respond to this inequality of access we have a duty to engage with these communities to identify and minimise barriers and improve access. However we also know that for some groups and individuals tackling inequality of outcome is not a case simply of improving access to services but requires a more holistic response to a variety of factors. The Schemes therefore distinguish between the experiences of sections of our community in accessing and benefiting from our services and issues of 'persistent and systemic' inequality which result in significant differences in outcomes for sections of our community.

4.4 The Equality Schemes also highlight the need to understand that some groups and individuals are less able to exercise choice and control over their lives. A number of Council services seek to address this 'inequality of autonomy' by empowering local people to access services and support to enable them to make positive decisions about their own lives and those of their families and wider community. However the Equality Schemes also identify areas in which choice and control are limited by the way services are delivered and contain actions to address this. Looking across the Equality Schemes it is clear that a tension exists between an understanding of the constraints on choice and autonomy experienced by some groups and individuals and a commitment to common standards of 'personal responsibility'. Addressing this tension requires that we work towards supporting individuals and groups to make active choices about their lives rather than focusing solely on inequality of outcomes for communities.

4.5 We know that the experience of groups and individuals is not determined by any one equality strand but by the interplay of various aspects of social identity within social and economic circumstances. Using the Equality Measurement Framework has enabled us to develop the Schemes in a consistent way, assessing qualitative and quantitative evidence of inequality against common criteria. It has also enabled us to make linkages between the equality strands. Mapping inequality across the strands in this way has helped us identify areas of persistent and systemic inequality which arise from a complex interplay of factors and require a holistic and long term response. These areas are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Priority areas of inequality to be addressed through Equality Schemes, 2009-12

Priority area	Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Religion/Belief	Sexual Orientation
A Prosperous Community: Worklessness	Reduce number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training	Increase number of disabled people in employment	Reduce rate of economic inactivity among working age women	Reduce levels of unemployment and worklessness amongst Bangladeshi and Somali residents	Reduce rate of economic inactivity among Muslim women	
A Prosperous Community: Educational achievement			Improve under performance of boys relative to girls at GCSE	Narrow the achievement gaps between different ethnic groups and between the national average		Improve the learning experiences of LGB young people by tackling homophobia in schools
A Great Place to Live: Housing		Increase access to independent living opportunities for disabled people		Address shortage of suitable social housing which has a disproportionate impact on BME families	Address shortage of suitable social housing which has a disproportionate effect on Muslim families	
One Tower Hamlets: Community cohesion	Strengthen inter-generational cohesion	Give disabled people a voice in decision making		Increase the extent to which people of different backgrounds feel that ethnic differences are respected in the borough	Increase the extent to which people of different faiths say they get on well together	Reduce homophobia and promote understanding and respect for LGB people

A Healthy Community: Health	Reduce childhood obesity		Improve life expectancy for men through effective health promotion services	Promote healthy lifestyles in an effective way to BME communities		Improve access to primary care health services for LGB people
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- 4.6 Addressing these persistent and systemic areas of inequality will require coordinated and sustained action by a range of partners including statutory sector organisations, the third sector and community leaders and groups. Each of the Equality Schemes identifies areas in which work with partners will be crucial to successfully reducing inequality. Thus work will build on strong existing partnership arrangements in a number of areas. These include the merging of the Human Resources functions of the Council and the Primary Care Trust and the joint 'Workforce to Reflect the Community' strategy, close operational links between the Council and Police in tackling hate crime and promoting community cohesion and the establishment in January 2008 of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Diversity and Equality Network (THDEN). The THDEN coordinates work on equalities across the Tower Hamlets Partnership and is responsible for delivering the Community Plan commitment to deliver the highest standard of equalities practice across the borough. This group will be crucial to delivering strategies to tackle the areas of persistent and systemic inequality outlined above.
- 4.7 The production of the Schemes and the use of the Equality Measurement Framework is intended to strengthen our understanding of inequality in the borough. The information and learning generated in the development of the Schemes will inform the production of a Single Equality Scheme for the Council in 2010. The production of such a Scheme will be a requirement of the Single Equality Bill announced in the Queen's Speech in December 2008.
- 4.8 Evidence gathering: Consultation and research
- 4.8.1 Evidence gathering for the four Schemes followed a common framework. In relation to Religion / Belief a programme of consultation was undertaken involving both community consultation to gain the views of service users and residents (in identifying and understanding the characteristics of faith communities in the borough and how this affects their use of services, their experiences and opportunities and the way they are supported to participate in the life of the borough) and internally within the Council to ensure that the needs of employees are taken into consideration. The process was overseen by a Programme Board which included representatives from key Council and partner services, the Interfaith Forum and the Council's self-organised Christian Prayer Groups and Muslim Staff Forum.
- 4.8.2 Evidence to inform the Race Equality Scheme was drawn together from a wide range of local and national data sources and service monitoring information. This was supported by specific consultation with different community organisations and internal consultation with services and staff.
- 4.8.3 A comprehensive baseline exercise was undertaken to inform the Age Equality Scheme using a combination of research and input from staff across the Council including analysis of demographic and statistical information, analysis of existing consultation and a review of relevant Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs). From the baseline information we were able to identify a number of areas for further examination and discussion. To test our findings and to gain further input as to which areas should be our priorities we undertook a number of consultation activities with residents, voluntary and statutory agencies and members of staff. The Scheme draws upon information from the Council's Children and Young People's Plan and Best Value Review of Older People's Services amongst other key existing strategies and policies.

4.8.4 Due to significant gaps in local information about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people two specific pieces of research were commissioned into the needs and the specific needs of older LGBT people to inform the Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme. These pieces of research were overseen by a subgroup of the Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum. Internal consultation with staff about their views and experiences of the Council as an LGB employer alongside an anonymous Stonewall questionnaire to all staff was also used to inform the scheme.

5. CONTENT OF THE EQUALITY SCHEMES

- 5.1 Each Scheme sets out what we know about the profile of our community in relation to the relevant strand and the nature of inequality experienced by people as a result of this element of their identity. The Schemes also contain a summary of the action which the Council and partners will undertake to address inequality and discrimination in relation to this equality strand.
- 5.2 These priorities, which cut across the six equality strands, are worklessness, educational achievement, housing, community cohesion and health. Linked to poverty all four sit at heart of inequality in Tower Hamlets. To make a dramatic shift against the inequality of Tower Hamlets and make progress on the wide range of issues identified in each of the schemes it is recommended that investment to address these five core inter-connected areas will lead that change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Our Equality Schemes articulate what the Council and partners need to deliver to achieve our aspiration of 'One Tower Hamlets' which is about reducing the inequalities and poverty that we see around us, strengthening cohesion and making sure our communities continue to live well together.
- 6.2 Tower Hamlets continues to face big challenges in terms of inequality and these Schemes further enhance the Council's capacity to respond by sharpening our understanding of what inequality looks like and by responding to its multidimensional aspects across the six strands.

10. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

- 10.1 The European Union Race Directive 2000/43 (published in June 2000) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnic origin by laying down "the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin".
- 10.2 In November 2000, the European Union published the Equal Treatment Framework Directive. This Directive sets out the anti-discrimination "principle of equal treatment" in the context of sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability and age. These Schemes strengthen our implementation of this Directive.

- 10.3 The Government consultation paper "Towards Equality and Diversity-Implementing the Employment Race Directive" (2001) indicated its intention to implement the Directives by amendment to the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The consultation paper also referred to the Government's intention to introduce legislation to prohibit discrimination in work and training on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion / belief and age. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003 were enacted with effect from 1 and 2 December 2003 and transposed the phase 1 provisions of the Directive into UK law. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 gave effect to the provisions on age discrimination with effect from 1 October 2006.
- 10.4 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 strengthens the Race Relations Act 1976 by extending protection against racial discrimination by public authorities and by placing a duty on public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote racial equality and good race relations.
- 10.5 The Equality Schemes 2009-12 set out the Council's intentions with regard to equality and have been formulated having regard to and in compliance with legislation. Regular monitoring and review of the Scheme will enable the Council to maintain compliance with statutory requirements as well as measuring progress in relation to non-statutory aspects and work towards developing a Single Equality by April 2010.

11. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 11.1 Equalities issues should be embedded into service delivery, and they are taken into account when budgets are set. As such, there are no additional budget implications arising from adopting the Equality Schemes 2009-12. However, if additional costs arise from implementing the action plans, they must be contained within current revenue budget provisions in directorates.

12. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 The new Equality Schemes represents an important step in progressing the Council's commitment to building One Tower Hamlets as a place in which people live together and where they are treated with respect and fairness regardless of their differences. The attached Schemes clearly show how equalities are at the heart of the Council agenda and the progress towards integrating diversity and equality fully into all aspects of service delivery and employment practice. The 2009-12 Schemes also specifically explore the inter relationship between work on equalities and community cohesion. The aim of the Schemes is to create an environment in which everyone who lives and works in our borough is treated with dignity and respect and where everyone can improve their life chances and access the increasing opportunities on offer.
- 12.2 The Equality Schemes aim to tackle the barriers currently preventing some of the most disadvantaged people in our community from accessing the life opportunities on offer and aims to enable them to actively participate in creating and sharing prosperity in the borough.

13. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 13.1 Efforts will be made to ensure that in delivering the commitments of the Equality Schemes the impact on the environment is kept to an absolute minimum. This includes

the use of recycled paper in any documentation, and careful consideration of the methods used to engage with local communities, partners and staff.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The Council is seeking to implement an ambitious diversity and equality agenda in the context of changes in national legislation and standards. Progress to date has been very positive, but there is still much to be done if all the Council's targets are to be achieved and all the new legislative requirements are fully complied with. Any slippage could potentially undermine this.
- 14.2 The new Equality Schemes provides a focus for all the Council's equalities work, and a means by which Members can ensure that each of the progress milestones are achieved. The arrangements in place to review progress during the year through the Corporate Equalities Steering Group, Corporate Management Team and finally by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are considered to be effective ways of keeping this work on track.
- 14.3 Diversity and equality performance indicators will help keep the focus firmly on delivery and outcomes. The emphasis on consultation will mean that the Council's performance in this area will be judged by the experiences of service users on the ground.
- 14.4 A greater emphasis will be given this year to communicating the progress that is being made to the wider community and to staff, including greater use of existing communications media such as East End Life and Pulling Together.
- 14.5 The Council will continue to work closely with the Improvement and Development Agency to ensure that local practice in implementing the new Equality Framework and all equalities issues is informed by best practice taking place in other parts of the country.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft Age, Race, Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation Equality Schemes

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 SECTION 100D (AS AMENDED) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of background papers:	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection
Diversity and Equality Action Plan 2008/09 agreed by Cabinet on 30 th July 2008.	Frances Jones, Diversity & Equality Coordinator, Scrutiny and Equalities 020 7364 4521
Diversity and Equality Action Plan Six Month Monitoring Report noted by Cabinet on 14 th January 2009	
Disability Equality Scheme, 2006-2009	
Gender Equality Scheme, 2007 - 2010	
Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008	

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**Tower Hamlets
Race Equality Scheme
2009-2012**

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Introduction

This is London Borough of Tower Hamlets' third Race Equality Scheme. It is timely that this scheme is launched in 2009, which marks ten years since the publication of the Stephen Lawrence report - a significant landmark in the history of race in Britain, and how the public sector deals with issues of equality. We have come a long way since our first Race Equality Scheme was produced in 2002 both in terms of our outcomes and our confidence and capacity to tackle race inequality. A decade later we are about to see an overhaul of equality legislation with the imminent Single Equality Bill which will replace current equality legislation.

This Scheme builds on the work of the last two Race Equality Schemes and outlines the Council's continued commitment to make sure that race equality is at the centre of its work when developing a policy or strategy, providing a service, or employing people.

The borough continues to face big challenges. We are the second most deprived borough in London, the third most deprived borough in the country and have the highest rates of child poverty in London. Poverty sits at the heart of inequality and is intrinsically linked to race inequality in Tower Hamlets. It disproportionately affects the lives and life opportunities of Black and other Minority Ethnic (BME) communities who are for the most part the poorest in the borough, earning lower incomes, working in lower skilled jobs, and experiencing some of the highest levels of economic inactivity and unemployment in London.

For this reason the overarching objectives of this Scheme remain unchanged from the first two Race Equality Schemes. What has changed is the profile of our communities and some of the ways and areas in which inequality manifests itself. Taking into account these changes, this Scheme offers a more sophisticated approach to understanding the diverse needs of communities in Tower Hamlets and delivering race equality priorities. With such a unique and diverse population it has never been appropriate to understand and respond to the needs of our BME communities as one group. We know that over the next twenty years the demographic profile of our community will significantly change and we will see significant growth in the number and relative size of smaller ethnic groups in the borough. Over the last ten years our understanding of the needs of some of our larger BME communities has improved and services have been tailored to respond effectively to their specific needs. This has been particularly true of the provision of services to the Bangladeshi community who make up a third of our population, making them the largest minority group in the borough.

This Scheme aims to sharpen our understanding of the diversity of and among communities in the borough and enable us to better meet the needs of residents and address inequality and discrimination. Just as it is inappropriate to think about ethnic minority communities as a single group, it is also inappropriate to think about any one single community in this way. For example the barriers to employment for a Bangladeshi woman may be different from the barriers faced by Bangladeshi men, younger Bangladeshis or those that have newly arrived in the borough.

Two principles have emerged in the research and development of this Scheme which will guide the Council's work on race equality over the next three years:

- We know that BME communities are more likely to experience inequality and discrimination than other groups, but that the experiences of different communities are not identical. We need to be more sophisticated in our use of the term 'BME' in describing communities, designing services to respond to their needs and our tracking progress against race equality objectives. BME can imply an undifferentiated group and using it in this way means that smaller communities are 'lost' and their needs not met effectively. Recognising the needs of newer white minority communities the Council adopts a broader definition of BME as 'Black *and* other minority ethnic'.
- We need to develop our understanding of diversity within ethnic groups. This Scheme sits alongside Equality Schemes in relation to age, disability, gender, religion/belief and sexual orientation and highlights areas in which inequality is related to an interplay of a number of these factors.

Within each of the Council's Equality Schemes we have identified three priority areas of inequality which require significant and sustained action across a number of Council services. These priority areas provide the Council with some high level direction about where attention and resources need to be targeted to make real progress. Without addressing these core inter-connected issues it will be difficult to shift inequality radically and make progress on the wide range of issues identified in each of Equality Schemes. In relation to race inequality, these priorities are set out below and are explored further in this Equality Scheme.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Tackle high levels of unemployment and worklessness amongst Bangladeshi and Somali residents.2 Tackle the disproportionate impact on Black and other Minority Ethnic communities of overcrowding and shortage of social housing.3 Increase the extent to which people from different ethnic groups get on well together. |
|---|

Race Equality Legislation

It was in response to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report that in 2001 the government toughened race relations legislation by giving public authorities a legal duty to promote race equality. The aim of the duty is to make race equality a central part of the way public authorities work, by putting it at the centre of policy-making, service delivery, regulation and enforcement, and employment practice.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A)A) places a legal General Duty on the Council, in everything we do, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

Under the legislation, the general duty is supported by a number of 'specific' duties one of which is to publish a Race Equality Scheme that sets out how we intend to fulfil the general and specific duties. Local authorities must also list the functions and policies (including proposed policies) that have been assessed as being relevant to the general duty to promote race equality. Other specific duties require local authorities to set out their arrangements for:

- assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies/proposed policies on promoting race equality
- monitoring policies for adverse impact on the promotion of race equality
- publicising the results of assessments, consultation and monitoring
- training staff in connection with the requirements of the general and specific duties.

Finally, the Act places an employment duty on local authorities to monitor, review and publish details of the number of staff from different racial groups:

- who are in post and apply for jobs;
- receive promotion and training;
- benefit or suffer from performance appraisals;
- are involved in grievances;
- are subject to disciplinary action and;
- who leave the authority.

This Scheme articulates how we intend to meet our general duties. In the next section the Council's corporate framework for Diversity and Equality sets out how the we will meet our specific duties.

How we developed our Race Equality Scheme

The development of our Scheme has been led by the Diversity and Equalities Team and supported by officers from the Corporate Equalities Steering Group (CESG) and Directorate Equality Focus Groups.

To develop the Schemes a comprehensive baseline exercise was undertaken using a combination of research and input from staff across the Council. Key activities undertaken included: analysis of demographic and statistical information, analysis of local and national research; consultation with services and teams, analysis of existing consultation and a review of existing Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs).

From the baseline information we were able to identify a number of areas for further examination and discussion. Wider consultation was undertaken with residents through street surveys, an Internet survey and consultation with community groups.

Using feedback from our consultation and baseline exercises, a number of key themes for priority and overarching activity have been set.

The Corporate Framework for Diversity and Equality

Delivery framework

Valuing diversity is one of four core values of Tower Hamlets Council. We promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve life for everyone living, working and visiting Tower Hamlets. We build upon this by working with the Tower Hamlets Partnership to provide accessible and responsive services that enable everyone to take part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough. Achieving this is central to delivering the Council's vision, is linked to the Strategic Plan priorities and objectives and forms a driving force within the Community Plan and key to creating a cohesive community.

Our aims and values

As a service provider we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the planning and delivery of our services in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status.
- Promote good relations between communities and address negative stereotyping of any groups
- Ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process
- Tackle harassment relating to a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status

As an employer we will:

- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for our workforce in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement)
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse nature of the borough

We will recognise our community leadership role and use this to work towards a cohesive community in which inequality is tackled and equality promoted.

Our commitment is supported by a number of legal duties that require us to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, including:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the 2004 Employment Regulations on Religion and Faith

However under current legislation, the requirements to address inequality and discrimination and promote equality vary between equality 'strand'. For example, while under current legislation we are required to address discrimination against employees on the basis of all six equality strands, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religion / belief, it is only in relation to race, gender and disability that this duty extends to the provision of services and the active promotion of equality. We believe however that we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and inequality exists for individuals and groups belonging to all of the six equality strands. We are therefore committed to going beyond the requirements laid down in law to address all six equality strands and to do everything that we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote better understanding and respect between all people.

To demonstrate our commitment to all six equality strands, the Council has gone beyond the legal requirement to produce Equality Schemes in relation to race, gender and disability and has published Schemes covering Religion/Belief, Age and Sexual Orientation equality. Each Scheme sets out what we know about the profile of our community in relation to the relevant strand and the nature of inequality experienced by people as a result of this element of their identity. The Schemes also contain a summary of the action which the Council and partners will undertake to address inequality and discrimination in relation to this equality strand.

How we will deliver our commitment

Tackling discrimination and promoting equality requires action at corporate, directorate, service, team and individual levels. At a corporate level the six Equality Schemes and the overall Diversity and Equality Action Plan identifies priority areas for work on equalities across the organisation. The Diversity and Equality Action Plan is agreed by Cabinet annually and monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee six-monthly along with a summary of progress on each of the Schemes.

Below we describe the processes and procedures we have put in place to embed the delivery of our commitment to promote equality in relation to all six strands within everything that we do as a Council:

- Undertake **equality impact assessments** of both new and existing policies and services
- Ensure that all our **team plans** incorporate relevant diversity and equality objectives and targets
- Ensure all new staff participate in Council **equality induction training** processes
- Ensure that our policies are compliant with **equality legislation**
- **Involve communities, staff and stakeholders** in the design, review and scrutiny of our services and employment practices
- Increase the extent to which our **workforce reflects the local community**
- Using our **procurement** powers to make sure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy
- **Monitor the equality profile** of people using and benefiting from our services to enable us to identify groups which are not accessing services

- **Provide information and access** to our services in accessible ways

The Profile of Ethnicity in Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets has a unique demographic profile even in comparison to other diverse boroughs across Britain. In 2001 just over half the population was white British, a third was Bangladeshi and the rest of the population was made up of a large number of much smaller but significant ethnic minority communities including African, Caribbean, Somali, Indian and Chinese communities. New migrants continue to move into the borough with some of the highest numbers coming from Bangladesh, Poland, Australia, Lithuania, India, France and Italy¹.

Since 2001 the population of Tower Hamlets has grown significantly from 202,000 to around 239,000, four times higher than the rate of increase across London as a whole. Over the next 10 to 15 years the borough is expected to see the largest and fastest growth in population in London; by 2012 the population is expected to rise by a 9% and by 2026 by a further 27%. This huge growth in population is not however expected to change dramatically the relative proportions of the white British and Bangladeshi communities living in Tower Hamlets which will continue to account for approximately a half and a third of the population respectively. However, the demographic profile of these two groups is likely to change significantly. More detailed information about each of the communities is set out below.

Although smaller minority communities will continue to account for a much smaller proportion of the population than white British and Bangladeshi groups, in absolute terms the increase in the numbers of people from smaller BME groups living in the borough will be significant. Over the next three years we expect to see a 9% rise in the white British population, a 6% rise in the Bangladeshi population and an 11% percent rise in all other smaller minority groups. Of the smaller communities we expect to see the biggest change in the Chinese population (18%) and the smallest change amongst the Black Caribbean population (0%).

Communities in Tower Hamlets

White British

The single largest ethnic group in the borough are white British who make up just over half the borough's population (51%) and this is likely to remain the case over the next 15 years as the population grows by an anticipated 24%. The age profile of the white British community is very different from the Bangladeshi and other BME communities. White British residents comprise nearly 50% of the 16 plus population compared to 25% who are Bangladeshi. However, white British children and young people only account for 20% of the school age population in the borough and this is likely to remain the case over the next 20 years. White British residents also make up 69% of the people over the age of sixty in the borough. This proportion is expected to drop to 54% over the next twenty years as the Bangladeshi population ages.

¹ New Communities in Tower Hamlets: characteristics, trends and challenges, Praxis, 2007

The proportion of white British residents is greater in more affluent parts of the borough including Bow, the Isle of Dogs, St Katherine's and Wapping. Generally white British residents are more likely to own their own homes, experience higher levels of employment and better health outcomes than other ethnic groups. However, as with all our communities the white British community is not a homogenous group and is diverse particularly in terms of socio economic status. For example on the Isle of Dogs, there is a contrast between longstanding working class white British families and more affluent newer white British residents who have been moved to the borough for work, and many of whom are single. A particular issue for families is that the educational achievement of white British children is amongst the lowest in the borough.

Bangladeshi

The size of the Bangladeshi community makes Tower Hamlets' population unique. The borough has the largest Bangladeshi community in the country. It makes up a third of the local population and is expected to maintain this relative size over the next 15 years. It is a very young population with half under the age of 20, which means the majority of young people in the borough are of Bangladeshi origin. Population projections indicate that, over the next twenty years, the proportion of people under twenty in the borough that are Bangladeshi will remain at around 60%. However, the proportion of over-60s who are Bangladeshi is projected to increase from 19% to 28% over the next twenty years.

Most Bangladeshi children in London were born in the UK, and in Tower Hamlets there are now three generations of Bangladeshis. The vast majority of Bangladeshis are Muslim. The proportion of Bangladeshi residents is highest in Spitalfields & Banglatown (58%); Whitechapel (52%); Shadwell (49%) and; Bethnal Green South (48%) wards. Deprivation indicators show that Bangladeshis are considerably more likely to live in social housing and suffer from poor employment, housing and health outcomes. There is also a higher rate of disability among Bangladeshi residents. Almost half of all Bangladeshis have no qualifications and experience high levels of unemployment and worklessness. The majority of Bangladeshis in employment work in the industrial sector, particularly in the restaurant trade where they are six times the average proportion of the workforce.

Chinese

In 2009 it is estimated that there are around 7,000 Chinese people living in the borough, making it one of the highest concentrations of Chinese people living in London. It comprises 3% of the population and is estimated to be the joint second (Somali is also 3%) largest minority community after Bangladeshis. The borough's Chinese population is concentrated in Millwall, Blackwall, Cubitt Town, and Limehouse wards. This community will see the largest percentage increase of any section of the population. There is also a large temporary Chinese population visiting or studying in London in higher or further education or English language schools. (2002).

Since the largest wave of immigration in the 1950s and 1960s the Chinese community has made rapid socio-economic advancement in Britain compared to other minority ethnic communities. Chinese people in London are more likely to be owner occupiers, have good health, experience higher levels of education and economic activity and more likely to be concentrated in professional and senior jobs than other minority communities. However whilst 20% of London's Chinese population are amongst the highest 20% of all London earners, 27% of London Chinese are in the lowest 20% of London earners. A large proportion of London's Chinese population is employed in the restaurant sector, where wage levels are generally low². Language barriers are a key issue for the Chinese community in accessing public services. The most commonly spoken languages are Mandarin and Cantonese.

Somali and Black African

Most Black African people living in London were born outside the UK. From the 1960s onwards, political instability in various African nations including Kenya, Uganda and Malawi has contributed to increased migration to Britain. More recent conflicts such as those in Rwanda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo have also led to migration from Africa. The more commonly spoken African languages include Swahili, Somali, Yoruba, and Twi.

78% of the Black African population is concentrated in London. The population in London has a very young profile with 30% under the age of 15 and a small population over the age of 50. 70% of Black Africans in London are Christian and 19% Muslim. Black Africans are quite highly qualified compared to other minority groups but experience high levels of unemployment. Black Africans in employment are better represented in (38%) in professional jobs however the majority work in lower paid elementary positions.

In Tower Hamlets a sizeable proportion of the Black African community are from Somalia. Accurately estimating the total number of Somalis is difficult because the 2001 Census did not have a specific category for 'Somali'. However we know from health and other public records that the Somali community in Tower Hamlets is significant and is estimated to be the joint second (with the Chinese community) largest minority community in the Borough. Data collected from a range of sources estimate that Somalis living in Tower Hamlets represent anything between 0.7% - 5% of the population. It is expected that the actual figure is most likely to be around 2-3%. The Somali population has a very young age profile with a larger proportion of 0-15 year olds and a smaller proportion of 20-39 year olds compared to the population as a whole.

Somali residents experience high levels of deprivation in terms of health, unemployment, education and housing. Somali residents are highly concentrated in poorer areas such as East India and Lansbury and Bethnal Green North. Most Somalis are Muslim, whereas other Black Africans are most likely to be Christian.

² Chinese People in the UK: Meeting Community Needs, 2005

African Caribbean

African Caribbean people make up approximately 2% of the borough's population which is smaller than the average proportion for London. This is the only group of residents that is expected to fall in numbers in Tower Hamlets over the next 20 years.

The African Caribbean population profile is young. Most African Caribbean people are born in the UK and as one of the longest settled minority ethnic communities they have a much larger proportion of people in the 50-64 age group than other black communities. In Tower Hamlets African Caribbean residents are largely concentrated in the north of the borough in Bow East and Bow West and are most likely to live in social rented housing. African Caribbean people are the most likely of all BME groups to be economically active, however Black men in particular experience high levels of unemployment. A quarter of African Caribbean people are likely to have no qualifications, which although high, is much lower than some other BME groups. 75% of African Caribbean people identify themselves as Christian.

New migrants

The term 'new migrant' refers to people who migrated to the Britain within the last five years. Research on new migrants in Tower Hamlets³ shows that there is a growing trend of people immigrating to the borough from Bangladesh and Somalia. However the rate of people arriving from Eastern Europe is higher and increasing, particularly for people from Lithuania and Poland. A less steep evident in people from Latin America particularly Columbia and Brazil. In addition there are other new communities from a wide range of different countries, but frequently in small numbers, which suggests a tendency towards hyperdiversity in the population. The trend of newcomers from refugee and asylum seeking communities continues, but it is not as steep as that of those entering from the "Accession 8" countries which joined the European Union in 2008. Findings also confirm that new communities tend to be young (under 40) and that there are more women than men.

There are three main reasons why people come to live in Tower Hamlets: social networks including friends or family already living in the area; employment opportunities; and availability of comparatively affordable accommodation. Contrary to assumptions many new communities, including those from Eastern Europe, intend to stay in the borough for a long time. This development suggests that people from these communities will be increasingly represented in take up of services including housing, healthcare and schools.

With the exception of those from Latin America, new communities tend to be relatively less well qualified than other groups living in Tower Hamlets, 15% have no qualifications and 55% have only graduated from secondary school. There are some differences between people of different regional origin. For example, 22% of Eastern Europeans

³ New Communities in Tower Hamlets: Characteristics, Trends and Challenges, 2007

have some sort of diploma and 20% of Latin Americans have a first degree. Many newly arrived communities experience extremely high levels of unemployment. Local research confirms that levels of unemployment among new communities varies significantly, with rates varying from 79% of people from Africa, 58% from Asia and 36% from EU Accession states.

People from new communities who are in work tend to be employed in low waged, low skilled and insecure jobs. Many participants who took part in our local study⁴ were employed as cleaners, care assistants, and in retail. A large proportion of Eastern Europeans work in construction, but this is not the case for other nationalities. The majority of new communities live in privately rented accommodation.

⁴ New Communities in Tower Hamlets: Characteristics, Trends and Challenges, 2007

The Story So Far

The Council has come a very long way since the first Race Equality Scheme was produced in 2002 in terms of outcomes and our confidence and capacity to tackle race inequality. Over the last ten years our understanding of the needs of our BME communities has improved significantly and this has been central to the design and delivery of our services. The Council is nationally recognised for its work in relation race equality and has been awarded Beacon Status for Community Cohesion, Getting Closer to Communities and Promoting Racial Equalities. A flavour of the Council's record on race equality is illustrated in the examples below.

Improved outcomes for young people: Tower Hamlets is one of the most improved education authorities in the country and in particular the attainment of Bangladeshi pupils has risen significantly. In 2008 43% of Bangladeshi pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE up from 38% in 2006. Across Key Stages 1-4 Bangladeshi pupils, and in particular Bangladeshi girls, are the highest performers in Tower Hamlets. Children's centres have been opened in the borough, helping under-fives and their families learn and develop together, whilst also advising parents on how to access affordable childcare and employment and training opportunities. The Council has halved the number of local young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Improved outcomes for older people: In response to an under-representation of Bangladeshi older people in the take-up of extra care schemes and residential and nursing home care our award winning Sonali Gardens scheme was established targeted at meeting the needs of this community. It not only provides day care facilities for around 40 people a day, but also offers 40 flats for especially vulnerable older people who need intensive around-the-clock care. A Bangladeshi care team provides a culturally sensitive environment designed to reflect the particular religious and cultural needs of this community. Care is provided around the clock by dedicated staff, most of whom speak at least one of three languages – Urdu, Sylheti or Bengali. Mayfield House Day Centre also provides 30 places daily to service users from the Somali community. Service users not only receive social, cultural and community support but they also receive practical assistance with translation and with legal, housing and benefits advice.

Improved communication: East End Life was launched by Tower Hamlets Council in 1993 in response to the Council's increasing frustration at being unable to get across positive messages in the press about its work and the contribution made by different communities to the growing success of the borough. As well as highlighting and promoting Council services and activities, it portrays a positive image of the community and encourages engagement with residents. East End Life has grown from a 12- page fortnightly newspaper to a 40-page weekly and is delivered free to around 75,500 local households, businesses, community groups and partner organisations. It carries a two-page Harmony section every week with news written in Bengali and Somali, the two main ethnic languages in the borough. The ICM Readership Survey also showed that among Bangladeshi respondents, 88% regularly read the paper, much more than any other local publication in English or Bengali.

A safer community: The Race and Hate Inter-Agency (RHIAF) have been instrumental in improving hate crime reporting in the borough. Increased numbers of third party reporting sites, such as the one at the East London Mosque, provide trained staff that are able to report crimes on behalf victims, without them having to meet directly with the police. This has meant that people who have been a victim of hate crime such as racial abuse or harassment, can report the incident in a more familiar environment than a police station, to staff with whom people can identify with more readily. In 2007/8 training on hate crime was delivered to over 500 people in the borough. Targetted work has taken place with hard to reach sections of BME communities such as the Somali Women, Bangladeshi disabled residents, Asian deaf Women, refugee and new migrants and BME gay men. Also in 2008 to raise awareness, RHIAF launched a high profile No Place for Hate Campaign which aims to prevent hate through promoting awareness, encouraging reporting and fostering community cohesion across all communities.

Workforce to Reflect the Community: Since 1998 the Council has had in place a 'workforce to reflect the community strategy', which was introduced on a firm understanding that quality services based on the needs of a diverse community are best served by a diverse workforce, drawn from the local area – staff with a real insight into the needs of local people. The outcomes of the Council's Workforce to Reflect the Community strategy have been positive. The percentage of BME staff has increased from 39% in 2002/3 to 48.4% in 2008/9 of which 19% are Bangladeshi.

This has been achieved through a wide range of successful recruitment, training and employment schemes for local people. The Council's Youth Training scheme provides local 16 to 18 year olds with work experience, up-to date vocational skills training, the chance to obtain appropriate qualifications and support to find a full time job within the Council or with another employer. The Tower Hamlets Graduate Development Programme has been running since 2000, with the aim of providing employment opportunities within the Council for local graduates from BME communities. Graduates learn specific skills on a dedicated work placement and, where possible, work towards a relevant professional qualification. Equalities education initiatives to develop a more representative teaching workforce have increased the proportion of BME teachers in Tower Hamlets schools was 14.3% in 2000 to 25% in 2007, the third highest in London. Our highly regarded Social Work Positive Action Scheme which offers a range of different entry routes and has increased the number of qualified social workers and occupational therapists from local Bangladeshi and Somali population.

Race Equality Priorities 2009-2012

The Tower Hamlets 2020 Community Plan vision is to *'improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the borough'*. The priorities of this Scheme have been aligned to the five Community Plan themes to ensure that race equality is at the centre of our work to achieve this vision. Set out in this section are the key priority themes and objectives that emerged from our consultation and baseline exercises.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS

One Tower Hamlets reflects the borough's ambition to reduce poverty and inequality, bring local communities closer together, and provide strong local leadership by involving people and giving them the tools and support to improve their lives. Set out below are our key race equality priorities that relate to this vision.

Community Cohesion

We want people to feel proud to live and work in Tower Hamlets and to have a bond with others who live here. For many people it is the cultural diversity of the borough that makes it a great place to live and work. The 2007/08 Annual Residents Survey found that most people (71%) say that Tower Hamlets is a place where people get on well together, that ethnic differences are respected (75%), and feel a sense of belonging (78%) to the borough. However we know that, these sentiments can be fragile if a deeper and more meaningful understanding and communication does not reinforce them.

There are three key inter-related aspects to strengthening community cohesion:

- We need to create the space and opportunity for residents from different backgrounds to come together;
- We need to promote an inclusive sense of belonging that all residents feel valued and a part of the community and;
- We need to promote understanding and awareness of different ways of life in the borough and continue to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

We know that experiences and feelings about cohesion vary in the borough and that some of these differences are linked to race. A recent government study into the sources of resentment and perceptions of ethnic minorities among poor white people in England also recommends improving communication and transparency of process to address perceptions of unfairness and competition for resources amongst white communities.

Consultation and Involvement

Effectively communicating with, listening to, consulting, and involving all sections of our diverse community is key to understanding and responding to race inequality. We need to ensure information, consultation and involvement opportunities are accessible and meaningful.

Our consultation shows that BME communities are keen to have a say about the issues that affect their lives. There are a plethora of mechanisms to facilitate engagement and community voice in the borough organised by third sector organisations and public bodies. Last year the Tower Hamlets Partnership exceeded targets to engage

Bangladeshi residents at Local Area Partnership events. However we recognise that that not all sections of larger minority communities such as older Bangladeshi people or Bangladeshi women and smaller minority communities are able to engage through these mainstream mechanisms. This means we need to continue to develop a more sophisticated approach to meaningfully engage these residents. Where engagement and voice is successfully working in the borough we need to better coordinate and connect these voices at the grassroots to decision making structures.

Community Development

Tower Hamlets has a strong, thriving and diverse community and voluntary sector with local communities actively engaged at a grassroots level. Communities moving into the borough have strengthened and evolved the sector over the years by establishing and integrating their own community infrastructures. The Bangladeshi community has contributed significantly to the community and voluntary sector in Tower Hamlets and has been successful in creating a community infrastructure that supports the local community. Organisations and groups provide a range of services from youth groups and leisure activities to information and advice and arts projects. However not all communities in the borough have the same capacity to organise in this way. Somali residents in particular aspire to strengthen and empower the community in a similar way to address issues of isolation amongst what they suggest is a more fragmented community.

Democratic participation

Local councillors play an important role in leading communities and supporting them to get involved in their neighbourhoods and local decision making. Democratic engagement in the borough is vibrant; voting in elections is higher than national averages, which is positively reflected in the ethnic makeup of our councillors, two thirds of whom are from BME backgrounds. To maximise this strength we need to improve the percentage of people in the borough who feel they can influence decisions in Tower Hamlets, which varies between communities. Asian residents (49%) are more likely to feel that they can influence decisions in the local area than black (39%) or white residents (36%). Smaller BME communities and BME women are less likely to be represented in democratic processes or local decision making and consultation suggests that they are also less likely to approach their local councillor for support.

Access to Services

Language barriers were identified as the single largest obstacle to accessing many public services particularly for smaller minority communities such as Somali and Vietnamese residents and new arrivals. The language needs of our communities have changed over the past 10 years. After Bengali, the second largest number of requests for interpreters in 2008 was made by Polish speakers. We need to understand and tailor the way in which we communicate with people who cannot speak English. Consultation

feedback tells us that interpreting and translation services and better staff representation within public services are both essential to ensuring that all communities are able to access the services they require. Consultation with smaller minority communities suggests that many perceive there to be a lack of interpreters speaking their language. Whilst interpreting and translation services are critical smaller minority communities also stressed the importance of better representation of staff from their communities in front line services which they feel is needed to help people *understand* as well as access services.

In Tower Hamlets the demand for English as a Second Language (ESOL) provision far exceeds supply, particularly at entry level. ESOL provision is of critical importance to improve access to services and employment but also to help reduce the vulnerability and isolation that some minority groups face and promote cohesion. It is important that provision is tailored to local needs. The ESOL needs of older residents in enabling them to access particularly health and care services, while not an employment or skills need, are nevertheless key in relation to meeting the needs of individuals from a social cohesion perspective. Both young Bengali and Somali women talked about the importance of culturally inclusive and accessible ESOL provision. Entry and employment level ESOL provision are of equal and connected importance and demand for both, and progression routes between them, need to be reflected in our approach to local provision.

Objectives

Community Cohesion

- Create the space and opportunity for residents from different backgrounds to come together
- Promote an inclusive sense of belonging particularly for smaller minority groups so that all residents feel valued and a part of the community.
- Promote understanding and awareness of different ways of life in the borough and continue to challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- Improve communication and transparency of process to address perceptions of unfairness and competition for resources between communities.

Consultation and Participation

- Improve the effectiveness of consultation and participation mechanisms to engage BME communities, paying particular attention to smaller minority communities and the diversity within larger BME communities.

Community development

- Further support and strengthen the capacity of BME third sector in Tower Hamlets paying particular attention to smaller and more isolated sections of the BME community.

Democratic participation

- Strengthen the capacity of local councillors to lead all sections of the local community and get them actively involved in their neighbourhoods and local decision making.
- Improve the representation of smaller BME communities and BME women in the democratic process and other local decision making structures.

Customer Access

- Improve understanding of current language needs and tailor the way in which we communicate with people who cannot speak English to ensure that interpreting and translation is able to improve access to services.
- Ensure the workforce to reflect the community strategy includes initiatives to engage smaller BME communities, particularly in frontline services.
- Improve access to culturally inclusive and accessible ESOL provision

A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Poverty sits at the heart of inequality and is intrinsically linked to race inequality in Tower Hamlets. We are the second most deprived borough in London, the third most deprived borough in the country and have the highest rates of child poverty in London. Poverty disproportionately affects the lives and life opportunities of BME communities who are the poorest in the borough, earning lower incomes, working in lower skilled jobs, and experiencing some of the highest levels of economic inactivity and unemployment in London. The Tower Hamlets Employment Strategy sets out a framework to tackle some of these complex issues of worklessness and child poverty within the borough.

Employment: Set out below are our key race equality priorities that relate employment.

Unemployment and worklessness: BME communities are much more likely to be economically inactive and unemployed: Nearly a third of the working age population in Tower Hamlets was economically inactive in 2008, much higher than in London (25%) or the UK (21%). Bangladeshi residents face the highest levels (56%) followed by Black African (35%) and Indian and Caribbean residents at 33%. Unemployment rates also vary considerably across different ethnic groups. According to the 2001 Census Bangladeshis experience the highest unemployment rates, exceeding 40% for those under the age of 25. In terms of gender, economic inactivity amongst working age Bangladeshi women is the highest in the country at around 75%.

There are high levels of unemployment amongst the Somali community but this often goes undetected as 'Somali' is not included as a specific ethnic category in the majority of data sets on employment. We do know however that Somali people experience the highest of unemployment (55%) in London and 72% are concentrated in lower paid jobs.

Analysis of employment by country of birth shows that migrants from developing countries face particular difficulties in accessing the labour market and once in work, tend to be concentrated in lower paid occupations. The unemployment rates for BME women born outside the UK is 51%, compared to 33% for white women born outside the UK. The unemployment rate for migrant women with children is 76%.

The borough has achieved rapidly improving school results, but this has not lead to a commensurate reduction in youth unemployment which is higher than the London average (17.7% compared to 11.8%). The proportion of 16-18 year old who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) is falling but remains high at 8.2% (January 2008). Children in the borough are twice as likely as the England average, and one and a half as likely as the London average, to be growing up in a workless household. With the majority of young people of BME backgrounds and with high levels of unemployment and worklessness amongst the BME community it is important to understand the barriers faced by young people brought up in workless families. This suggests the need to focus support to make successful transitions from education to

work.

Access to employment: We have seen an unprecedented growth in jobs of 56% over the last 10 years compared to 7.7% in London, yet we experience some of the highest unemployment rates in the country.

Many of these jobs are concentrated in areas that BME groups are under represented and are less able to access such as finance, IT or other business activities (54%) or public administration, education and health (17%)⁵. BME communities are more likely to work in manual jobs and much less likely to be working in professional or managerial jobs where as the opposite is the case for white British residents. Bangladeshi residents (40%) and African residents (30%) are most likely to be working in elementary, factory or retail jobs.

Qualifications: Qualifications and skills have a big part to play in improving access to better employment opportunities and are strongly associated with employment rates. Bangladeshi residents are most likely (45%) to have no qualifications in Tower Hamlets as are some of our smaller minority communities and new communities. London wide data shows that migrants with qualifications are twice as likely to be in employment (72 per cent) as migrants with no qualifications (35 percent). We also experience some of the highest levels of graduate unemployment in the country. Consultation feedback revealed frustration amongst Bangladeshi and Somali graduates who are working in low skilled jobs and have found it difficult to access professional jobs despite their skills and qualifications

Objectives

- Improve economic activity rates amongst the Bangladeshi and Somali community paying attention to the particular barriers that women from these communities face.
- Make employment services available in community settings, targeting workless families.
- Develop an up-to-date and detailed understanding of the profile and causation of worklessness among BME communities in the borough.
- Improve the under-representation of BME communities in key employment sectors by promoting the best practice in relation workforce to reflect the community and encouraging and working with major organisations in the borough to adopt similar initiatives.
- Maximise employment, placement, apprenticeship and training opportunities amongst workless people in the public sector, building on existing good practice within the Council and NHS services
- Support qualified BME residents to access professional jobs
- Improve the qualification and skills levels of Bangladeshi and Somali adults in Tower Hamlets.

⁵ Census 2001

- Raise both aspirations and skills of BME children and young people make successful transitions from education to work through more effective advice, guidance and support.

Education: In Tower Hamlets we want to use education to break the cycle of poverty and give people a step into employment. Set out below are our key race equality priorities that relate education.

Educational Attainment

In comparison to the rest of London, Tower Hamlets has a unique younger school age profile. 70% of the under 19 population is from a BME background of which the large majority are Bangladeshi. In 2008 the majority of pupils in *primary school* were Bangladeshi (64%), with a minority of white (12%), Somali (3%), Black African (2.5%), white other (2.5%) and Black Caribbean (2%) pupils. In *secondary schools* over half (56%) were Bangladeshi, 15% white, 5% black African, 3.5% Black Caribbean and 2.6% Somali. Bangladeshi and Somali were the top two of community languages spoken at home by pupils.

Overall educational achievement between the ages of 5 and 19 has risen substantially in the borough in the last ten years. However to continue to deliver ambitious educational achievement outcomes we need to bridge the achievement gaps between different ethnic groups and between boys and girls, particularly at GCSE and in key curriculum areas.

The attainment of Bangladeshi pupils has risen significantly over the last ten years. 2008 educational attainment figures show that between Key Stages 1-4 Bangladeshi pupils, and in particular Bangladeshi girls, are the highest performers in Tower Hamlets. On the whole Bangladeshi girls perform better than, or in line with the national average. Bangladeshi boys overall perform better than the national average for Bangladeshi pupils but below overall national average up until Key Stage 4. The gaps between national and local performance is greatest for Bangladeshi boys at Key Stage 4 whose performance (55%) is below the Bangladeshi national average (56%) and overall national average for all pupils (64%).

Black Caribbean pupils are the second highest achievers in Tower Hamlets and perform in general above the national Black Caribbean average up until Key Stage 2. However at Key Stage 3 the performance of Caribbean pupils starts to fall below the national Caribbean average and considerably below the national average. On the whole Black Caribbean girls perform much better than boys and at Key Stage 4. Only 42 % of Black Caribbean boys achieved 5 A*-C GCSE's below the national Caribbean average (47%) whilst Black Caribbean girls (72%) achieved significantly above the national Caribbean and overall national average.

White pupils are amongst lowest achieving pupils and generally performing lower than

Bangladeshi and Caribbean pupils across Key Stages 1-4. The performance of white pupils falls below the national white average and the gap is most significant at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in particular for white boys. At GCSE 46% of white boys achieved 5 grades A*-C, considerably below the national average for white boys (60%). The performance of white girls (51%) also falls considerably below the national average for white girls (68%).

Of the four largest ethnic groups in Tower Hamlets schools, the Somali community are the lowest performers and for the most part achieve significantly lower grades than Bangladeshi and African Caribbean pupils and slightly lower grades than white pupils. Somali girls do significantly less well than boys at GCSE with 40.7% achieving 5 grades A*-C compared to 52.9% of boys.

Schools Workforce to Reflect the Community

To help deliver the best educational outcomes it is important that staff in schools reflect the diversity of the local pupil population. Improving the representation of BME teachers has been a key part of our approach to improving educational attainment in the borough. Local initiatives aimed at training and recruiting BME teachers has seen the percentage of BME teachers rise from 21% in 2002 to 29% in 2008.

We need to continue to improve the representation of BME teachers locally, particularly for some smaller minority groups such as the Somali community who are under-represented and where take up of the training and recruitment initiatives is low. We need to also understand the barriers that BME teachers face to progression and improve their representation in senior positions and headships.

Objectives:

- Address the specific under-achievement of white and Somali communities across all Key Stages.
- Address the under-achievement of white, Caribbean and Bangladeshi boys particularly at Key Stage 4.
- Continue to improve the representation of BME teachers in local schools paying particular attention to promote teaching as a career to smaller minority communities.
- Increase the percentage of BME teachers moving into leadership positions

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

By 2020 our vision is that Tower Hamlets will continue to be a place that attracts people to settle and raise families, to study, to work in a thriving local economy and enjoy the rich cultural life. The ambition is for everyone to have the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford, and for all children to have a bedroom of their own.

Housing has an important impact on reducing inequality given its relationship to many other outcomes such as health, safety, employment and education. Many residents recognise that housing has improved in the Tower Hamlets, however access to a decent, safe and secure home remains a critical issue. The borough is an area with a very large demand for social and affordable housing, acute housing need and limited affordable options. The following key race equality issues emerged from research and consultation in relation housing:

Overcrowding: The rate of overcrowding (14%) in Tower Hamlets is much higher than the average rate in London (5%). Overcrowding disproportionately affects BME communities in the borough with 72% of Bangladeshi households short of one or more rooms, compared to 48% of black and 23% of white residents. It has a wide range of disproportionate knock-on affects: children and young people living in over-crowded homes have little or no place to study; it can affect safety and lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour as young people may spend less time in their homes and more on the streets; and it is associated with increased transmission of infectious diseases and mental health problems.

Demand and affordability: The demand for social housing far outstrips supply. The number of households on the Common Housing Register is over 20,000, but every year only about 2000 social housing lets become available, only 13% of which are family size homes. BME residents, in particular Bangladeshi and African residents are much less likely to own a home and much more likely to be living in Council or social rented accommodation. With the largest forecast population increases in London, continuing migration, high levels of deprivation and unaffordable house prices and rent the levels of demand across all communities, but particularly within the BME community, for social housing is set to increase. Eastern European migrants who have lived in the borough for more than 12 month are also starting to have the same rights as any other EU citizen which will start to add to the pressure for social housing.

Access: A Choice Based Lettings System (CBL) for social housing was introduced in 2002 which means available homes are advertised and applicants on the housing list can choose the homes they want to be considered for by 'bidding' for any homes they feel are suitable. National research suggests that the system has been successful in providing people with more choice and control over access to social housing. The research found that the system can however disadvantage BME applicants with little or no English who find it difficult to use the system without assistance from family and friends or community or voluntary groups. This was echoed in local consultation with Somali residents. They felt that language barriers and a lack of Somali speaking staff

therefore meant that Somali residents may not understand the system and have difficulty accessing it.

Quality of Housing: In 2006 62% of social housing in the borough fell below decent homes standard. There is significant variation by ward in non-decent housing. East India and Lansbury both have over 25% higher levels of non-decent stock than Bow East. BME residents are much more likely than other groups to live in social housing which means they are likely to be disproportionately affected by non-decent housing.

Homelessness: Demand on homeless services is extremely high and disproportionately affects BME communities. At the Homeless Service alone, over 4000 households per year present some form of housing need. Overcrowding, is the main cause of homelessness, which alongside population growth, unaffordable housing and high rents suggests homelessness, particularly for BME communities is set to increase. The way in which homelessness is likely to affect most of the borough's poorest BME communities will differ and therefore it is important to understand the different profiles, needs and impacts on different BME groups. For example Somali residents talked about the affects of a high incidence of family break-up leading to an increase of homelessness for single men, whilst amongst the Bangladeshi community there is likely to be high levels hidden homelessness particularly amongst young people who cannot afford to move out of family homes.

The arrival of newer communities is also affecting levels of homelessness in the borough. 26% of participants who took part in a local study into the needs of new communities in Tower Hamlets reported they were homeless or living in insecure housing. The study identified that people of African origin and Eastern European origin were disproportionately affected

Objectives

- **Overcrowding:** Reduce levels of overcrowding and work in partnership to minimise the wider impacts of over-crowding such as a lack space at home for young people to study.
- **Demand and Affordability:** Improve understanding of the future housing needs and demand of BME communities in the borough and ensure that they effectively inform the planning of future housing provision.
- **Access:** Ensure there is equal access to social housing for BME communities facing language barriers or may find it more difficult to understand the system.
- **Homelessness:** Improve understanding of the extent and impact of homelessness on different BME communities and ensure that they inform strategies to address homelessness in the borough.

Leisure

A mixture of views about leisure facilities emerged from consultation. There have been improvements in usage of leisure facilities by Bangladeshi residents, particularly amongst women. However other smaller minority groups such as Vietnamese and Somali residents felt that these that language barriers meant that many people from those communities did not know about or felt uncomfortable accessing leisure services.

Women-only services have improved usage of leisure services by BME women and the take-up of services is good with the demand far exceeding supply. However a difficulty in recruiting female sports supervisors and instructors is limiting the services that can be provided. Timing of activities for BME women is very important as some are less likely to go out after dark or the evenings.

Improving physical activity is critical to addressing some of the serious health problems that BME communities face. Younger BME men and women are more likely to participate in physical activity than older people. For example in the 35-54 age band 98% of Asian residents in the borough reported that they did not exercise for at least half an hour three times a week. It is particularly important to improve the rate of physical activity in this group as they suffer disproportionately from serious health conditions which can be improved or prevented by adopting healthier lifestyles.

Objectives:

- Continue to promote access to leisure facilities for BME groups paying particular attention to different sections of larger BME communities and smaller BME communities Continue to provide culturally appropriate leisure facilities for BME women
- Work with local communities to improve the representation of smaller BME communities working in leisure services and address difficulties in recruiting BME female leisure staff.
- The PCT and Leisure services to work in partnership to promote health lifestyles and encourage physical activity amongst BME groups who suffer the highest preventable health risks.

A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Our vision is that crime and anti social behaviour will be greatly reduced in our neighbourhoods so that all residents and visitors feel safe and confident in their homes and on the streets. Services will ensure that everyone, particularly the vulnerable, is protected from risk of harm and is enabled to live a full and independent life. Parents and families will get the support they need to give children the best possible start in life.

Crime in Tower Hamlets has fallen by nearly a quarter over the past four years but continues to be the largest concern for local residents. We know that the experience of crime and community safety is not the same for all our communities and recognise that inequality and crime is strongly linked. Set out below are our key race equality priorities that relate to promoting a safe and supportive community.

Reduce the overrepresentation of some BME communities as perpetrators and victims of crime.

We know that some ethnic groups are disproportionately represented as victims and/or perpetrators of crime. In the case of violent crime for example, African Caribbean people are significantly over-represented as both victims and perpetrators. We know from anecdotal information that young black and Asian boys are more at risk of becoming victims of and being convicted as perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. Probation and prison data from 2007 indicates that Bangladeshi, Caribbean and African residents are also over-represented in groups serving community and prison sentences. We also recognise that young people are overrepresented as victims and perpetrators of crime. With over 70% of under 19 year olds in the borough of BME background it is important to understand the experiences of crime in terms of age and ethnicity. We need to develop our understanding of the underlying causes of this over-representation and use our strategies to support and work with victims and perpetrators of crime to address these inequalities.

Demonstrate fairness and transparency of Stop and Search procedures

In recent years there has been a sharp increase in the use of stop and search powers in the borough as a result of an increased focus by the Police on issues such as terrorism and knife crime. BME people are more likely to be subject to Stop and Search than white groups. Of the 2064 people stopped and searched in October 2008, 27% were of white, 15% were black and 55% were Bangladeshi. This is a controversial issue that particularly affects the confidence and trust of BME communities in the Police and criminal justice service. Therefore we need to demonstrate the fairness, transparency and purpose of the process.

Continue to tackle race hate crime

Tower Hamlets has one of the highest levels of reported hate crime in London, the majority of which is race hate crime. However the number of reported race hate crimes is falling and feedback from consultation has been positive. BME residents say that in some respects they feel safer in Tower Hamlets than elsewhere and feel that physical safety has improved over the past five to ten years. Somali and Bangladeshi residents

talked positively about how 'no-go areas' that used to exist for them were now a thing of the past. Young BME women told us how living within a diverse community made them feel more comfortable, safe and secure.

Improve local ethnicity monitoring and analysis of crime

Poor and inconsistent recording of crime by ethnicity makes it difficult to establish an accurate understanding of crime and community safety experiences of different communities. In many cases ethnicity is recorded by the Police on the basis of ethnic appearance which does not correspond with other local ethnic monitoring categories. The use of the category 'Black African' in particular means that it is difficult to understand the experience of Somali communities.

Further develop culturally appropriate responses to domestic violence

The Police deal with 4,000 incidents a year of domestic violence and these account for over 30% of reported violent crime. Both adults and children are affected, and domestic violence is a major cause of homelessness, as well as a factor in a high proportion of child protection cases. We know that domestic violence services have achieved significant increases in use of services by Bangladeshi women. However the issue continues to be an important priority and during consultation with Bengali and Somali women undertaken to develop this Scheme they highlighted a need to further develop services to reach isolated women and those in smaller BME communities.

Support vulnerable families and individuals

Some sections of our BME communities can be particularly vulnerable and isolated. A quite specific issue that emerged from the consultation with Somali residents is that there is a high incidence of divorce within their community. Consultees talked about the considerable affect this has on families, including leaving women isolated and struggling to bring up children alone as single mothers, high levels of depression and negative affects on young people who lack father figures, particularly boys.

New migrants who come to Tower Hamlets to join their partners from abroad may be particularly isolated and/or vulnerable as they tend to lack wider family or social support structures. This can have a detrimental effect on mental health and wellbeing.

Objectives

- Work with strategies to support victims and perpetrators of crime to respond to the over-representation of Black and Asian men as perpetrators and victims of some crimes.
- Demonstrate fairness and transparency of process in the application of stop and search in Tower Hamlets.
- Ensure that victims of race hate crime have access to appropriate protection and support and prevent race hate through promoting awareness, encouraging reporting and building community cohesion across all communities.
- Continue to deliver and further develop culturally appropriate responses to domestic violence.
- Improve local ethnicity monitoring and analysis of crime and community safety

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

By 2020 our vision is that local people will live longer and healthier lives. The wider influences on health such as poverty, housing and employment will have improved making it easier for people to lead healthy lives. Everyone will have access to high-quality, local health and social care services, from primary care at GP surgeries to maternity care and mental health services.

Health inequalities are created by differences in health status driven by inequalities in society. We know that BME groups generally have much worse health than the overall population caused by poor social and economic circumstances such as housing and unemployment. As the third most deprived borough in the country residents in Tower Hamlets experience substantially poorer health than London and England. For example, residents from some of the most deprived parts of the borough with the highest concentrations of BME residents such as St Dunstan's and Stepney Green are likely to live up to 8 years less than residents living more affluent areas such as Millwall. Within the borough some communities fare much worse than others and patterns vary from one health condition to the next. Local health data and consultation feedback indicates that some of the key race equality issues relating to health in Tower Hamlets are:

Life expectancy: Coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke are the leading causes of death and residents are 63% more likely to die prematurely from CHD compared to England as a whole. For Bangladeshi and South Asian men CHD is of epidemic proportions and rates are higher than anywhere else in Western Europe. Risk factors for this disease include smoking, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, being overweight or obese, diabetes and having family heart disease. Strategies to improve awareness of health risks and promote healthy lifestyles need to be further developed to respond to the scale of the task and more directly engage with specific BME communities, or sections within these communities who are particularly hard to reach and most at risk.

Smoking: Smoking is the biggest preventable cause of death in Tower Hamlets. Rates at 37% are much higher than the national average (27%) and Bangladeshi men (40%) are reported to have the highest smoking rates of all ethnic groups. It is also reported that 19% of Bangladeshi men and 26% of Bangladeshi women have used some form of oral tobacco, which leads to increased risk of mouth cancer. Stopping smoking or the use of oral tobacco is a key lifestyle factor in reducing BME mortality, morbidity, and improving health. The risk of a heart attack is halved within a year and that of lung cancer is halved within ten years.

Substance misuse: One of the most significant concerns raised in consultation is the misuse of drugs and the profound negative affect this has on lives. Tower Hamlets has a higher than both London and national average of opiate use and higher than national use of crack cocaine. Male Bangladeshis using heroin account for at least 50% of the treatment population. Bangladeshi (94%) treatment users are more likely to be engaged

in opiate use than White British (77%) or Black (67%) users.

The Drug and Alcohol Action Team estimate that about 63% of problematic drug users in the borough are currently not accessing treatment services. The number of BME drug users and specifically Bangladeshi women who access drug services is disproportionately low and those that do engage usually do so as part of a wider Social Care intervention.

In consultation young Bangladeshi boys talked about the high prevalence of drugs on streets and neighbourhoods making young people vulnerable to drug misuse. Shame and stigma attached to drug use means that most people find it difficult to turn to families for support, but consultees suggest that for many BME drug users this is even more difficult.

Amongst the Somali population the use of the legal substance Khat, a leaf that contains an amphetamine-like stimulant, causes significant community concern. Local research estimates that 59% of Somali men and 15% of Somali women chew Khat and suggests that it can lead to schizophrenic behaviour and depression and problem drinking. It can also be the cause of violent behaviour, financial and family problems. This was echoed by local Somali women who felt that Khat has been responsible for high levels of depression and divorce amongst their community.

Mental health: In the UK one in five mental health in-patients are from a BME background, compared to about one in ten of the population as a whole. In Tower Hamlets there is evidence of a high proportion of undiagnosed depression and the prevalence of schizophrenia is four times the national average. In 2008 of 128 patients at the Tower Hamlets Early Intervention Service (THEIS), a service for all those with a first presentation of a psychotic disorder, 82% were BME, 71% male and in their early 20s, 74% has a history of violence and high levels of unemployment and cannabis use. People of African Caribbean origin are over-represented on mental health wards by 400% and also over-represented in detention under the Mental Health Act. There is limited mental health data available, but it is thought that there are high levels of admission to inpatient wards for Somali people.

The issue of mental health and depression stood out quite starkly in consultation results. Somali residents talked about low incomes, unemployment, Khat usage, family breakdown, isolation, and for women in particular being a lone parent as causes of depression. Bangladeshi residents echoed some of these issues and highlighted that in many cases depression is not understood and both men and women struggle with it unrecognised. Stigma around mental health and a reluctance to talk about the issues serve as barriers to accessing support.

Learning disabilities: National and local evidence shows an high incidence of learning disabilities within South Asian populations. Therefore it is important to have a fuller understanding at a local level within the Bangladeshi and other smaller BME

communities to inform future commissioning plans. In particular, given the age profile of these populations locally, the prevalence rates amongst children and young people need to be understood to inform longer term commissioning strategies for adult services.

Older People: One of the most significant population changes in terms of ethnicity is amongst the Bangladeshi over-60s which is due to increase from 19% to 28% over the next twenty years. This has important implications for the kind of support we provide to older people and the demands of culturally appropriate services.

Carers: Tower Hamlets has one of the highest proportions of BME carers in London. Bangladeshi people, particularly women, are three times more likely to provide care to family members than people from white British groups. BME carers are multiply disadvantaged in terms of their own health, the health of those they care for and in terms of problems accessing health and social care services. There is a range of barriers that prevent BME carers from accessing support including not knowing about the support available to them, to language and cultural barriers. With a growing older BME population the number of BME carers is set increase in the next 10-20 years. It is therefore important that we understand the barriers that BME communities face and continue to improve their access to support.

Knowledge gaps in health needs: Although we hold good robust information about the health needs of the Bangladeshi and white communities there are some significant gaps in the needs of other smaller minority communities. For example, due to the way ethnicity is coded some services have a category for Somalis while for others it is incorporated into 'Black other' or 'Black African' which means that accurate assessment of a community known to suffer from poor health is not available.

Objectives:

- Healthy lifestyles and smoking cessation: Further tailor specifically targeted culturally appropriate health campaigns to improve awareness of specific health risks and promote healthy lifestyles among specific BME groups experiencing poor health
- Drugs misuse: Continue to improve access to treatment services amongst different BME communities and develop initiatives to reach out to under-represented groups and BME women.
- Develop culturally appropriate strategies to work with BME families in the safeguarding young people from getting involved in drug misuse and support families experiencing drug addiction.
- Improve understanding of the impact of all current drug use (not just problem drug use), including the use of Khat amongst the Somali community, and associated harm on different BME communities locally.
- Develop education and support initiatives to inform Somali people about the effects of Khat and reduce its usage.
- Mental health: Improve the understanding of mental health needs of BME communities and strengthen the accessibility and delivery of mental health services

to the BME community.

- Learning disabilities: Continue to develop a fuller understanding of the picture of learning disabilities at a local level within the Bangladeshi and smaller BME communities to better inform future commissioning plans.
- Older people: Develop a fuller understanding of the implications of a growing older Bangladeshi population on health and adult social care services.
- Carers: Improve understanding of the barriers that BME carers face and increase their access to support.

Promoting Race Equality an Employer

The Council is committed to promoting equality as an employer and is proud of its long-standing commitment to the achievement of a workforce that reflects the local community. We have strengthened our capacity to deliver on this commitment by bringing together the PCT and Council Human Resources functions to produce a joint 'Workforce to Reflect the Community' Strategy.

In order to meet our employment duties under the RR(A)A and ensure that no group is disadvantaged in applying for and undertaking employment in the Council we monitor by ethnicity:

- Recruitment and selection
- Numbers of staff in post
- Training
- Promotions
- Harassment and discrimination complaints and other grievances
- Disciplinary proceedings
- Starters and leavers
- Performance management

This information is analysed and published each year in the Race Equality Scheme Employment Monitoring Report and reported to the Corporate Equalities Steering Group Based on this information as well as staff consultation our race equality employment priorities are set out below.

Recruitment and Selection

The outcomes of the Council's Workforce to Reflect the Community strategy have been positive. The percentage of BME staff has increased from 39% in 2002/3 to 48.4% in 2008/9 and 19% are Bangladeshi.

However we recognise that there is still a lot more progress to be made in tackling the under-representation of BME staff. In 2007/8, Bangladeshi residents made up 27% of the working age population but only 21% of successful job applicants in the Council and 19% of the workforce. Although there is an over-representation of African Caribbean staff this masks and significant under-representation of Somali staff who make up a very small fraction of black staff working in the Council and only 1% of all staff.

We have identified that there are also differences in representation across the directorates that need to be addressed, this is particularly important to note in terms of frontline services and customer access. Our consultation revealed that access to services is still one of the biggest issues particularly for smaller minority communities such as the Somali community. Monitoring in 2009 shows that for Communities Localities and Culture and Adults Health and Wellbeing which include of many important frontline services only 17% of staff are Bangladeshi and only 1.7% are Somali.

Progression and Career Development

The Council is committed to investing in and developing all employees and for some years now has recognised and sought to address the under-representation of BME staff in middle and senior management. Analysis of 2008/9 records show the majority of Bangladeshi and Black employees are predominantly located in the up to £20k salary bracket and under-represented in middle management and senior positions. In the £40k and above salary ranges 4.8% are Asian, 7% are Bangladeshi and 9.9% are Black. In Children's Services (where there is the highest proportion) only 6 (or 5.7%) of the senior managers (top 5%) are from a Bangladeshi background; in the Adults Health and Wellbeing and Resources Directorates there none. Council wide at senior manager level, there are only 9 Bangladeshi staff. The profile appears more favourable for Black African/ Caribbean staff with it being possible to conclude that overall, there is a representative proportion of African/African Caribbean staff at management level (those earning above £40K) in the organisation. However, amongst senior managers there is only 6 African/African Caribbean staff in the organisation.

The Council has put in place a number of initiatives targeted at developing and progressing BME staff. This includes Aspiring Leaders and Step Up Now Programmes which are positive action initiatives for BME staff that provide study support for a post graduate Diploma in Management Studies or Certificate in Team Leadership or First Line Management aimed at supporting career development. Other initiatives include positive action schemes on social work and other services, and local graduate and youth trainee schemes.

In 2008 a strategic level equality impact assessment (EQIA) of staff progression was undertaken. This EQIA sought to undertake an evidence based analysis of staff progression looking in detail at the different opportunities and factors that affect progression within the organisation. This found there was no significant overall variance in progression between different groups of staff. However, the greatest challenge for the Council is the need to increase the diversity of its senior managers. The EQIA identified that under-representation of BME staff in management posts is an issue of recruitment rather than progression. Improvements in recruitment of BME staff have been concentrated at entry level or lower grade position, further work to improve recruitment of BME staff at management grade now needs to take place.

The Council and PCT Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy recognises that it is important to ensure that career development / advancement pathways from junior and middle management positions exist to facilitate the preparation of BME staff in the longer-term to move into most senior (top 5%) of positions.

Training and Development

The ability to build on or acquire new skills within an employee's job is a key feature of the Council's learning and development programme. A wide range of learning opportunities are provided and employees are supported in learning through their work

as the Council believes that investment in employees shows through in the quality of work and a high level of staff engagement. Consequently, the uptake of learning and development events is recorded by ethnicity to ensure that every employee has access to continuous professional development.

The number of BME participants at corporate learning and development events is representative of the workforce and has significantly increased since 2002/03, however further promotion of learning and development opportunities is required to develop staff and increase the percentage of BME staff progressing into senior positions in the Council.

Working conditions and Working Environment

In order to ensure that managers and employees are aware of their responsibilities in working with diversity and progressing equalities in the workplace incorporating regulations relating to race equality, regular learning opportunities are offered to employees.

The Council has policies and procedures in place to promote equality of opportunity and to address circumstances where an employee believes that they have been disadvantaged. The Council has a Combating Harassment and Discrimination Procedure and monitors the complaints received. The number of grievances submitted by employees is also monitored. 2007/08 figures show that the Council needs to investigate why 57% (8 out of 14) employees dismissed under the Disciplinary Procedure were Black.

Additionally, there is a BME Staff Forum which meets on a quarterly basis and is supported by Corporate Human Resources and the Diversity and Equalities Team. The purpose of the Forum is to give BME employees a means of raising collective issues in relation to their employment. It also provides a means for the Council to consult on employment policies and practices to help ensure that the Council has the mechanisms in place to recruit and retain BME staff. The main issues that the Forum raised in the last year relate to progression of BME staff and the impact of re-structures on BME staff.

Objectives

- Improve the representation of Bangladeshi and Somali staff in the organisation across the directorates
- Examine and address the under-representation of BME staff at management level within the organisation.
- Act on the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment of career progression for Council staff.
- Continue to provide targeted learning and development opportunities for BME staff and review the impact of existing BME targeted initiatives to ensure that they are successfully developing and progressing staff.
- Investigate the over-representation of black staff facing dismissal under the Disciplinary Procedure.

- Review the Organisational Change Procedure in respect of how the impact of re-structures on different staff groups is given appropriate consideration.
- Continue to support and develop the Council's BME Staff Forum.

Delivering the Race Equality Scheme objectives, 2009-12

Drawing on the findings outlined above, we have identified a number of key areas in which the Council along with its partners needs to take action to ensure that we promote equality for everyone living, working or visiting Tower Hamlets. The action plan outlines a programme of actions to address issues where there is evidence of inequality based on race.

Race Equality Scheme Action Plan

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
ONE TOWER HAMLETS				
	<p>Create the space and opportunity for residents from different backgrounds to come together</p> <p>Promote an inclusive sense of belonging particularly for smaller minority groups so that all residents feel valued and a part of the community.</p>	<p>Review community cohesion principles to embed One Tower Hamlets in service delivery and development: Learning from existing community cohesion initiatives assessed to develop proposals for ensuring that cohesion is evidenced and embedded into service planning and delivery</p> <p>Use the Olympic and Paralympic Games to engage communities in cultural, sporting and celebratory events:</p> <p>Paradise Gardens Major Community Event June 2009 (CLC)</p> <p>Field Day / Underage Event August 2009 (CLC)</p> <p>Personal Best Programme and recruiting - Apr 09 Nick Smales (D&R)</p> <p>Delivery Arrangements and SLAs agreed with partner delivery agencies- Apr 09 Nick Smales (D&R)</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p> <p>Service Head Cultural Services</p>	<p>September 2009</p> <p>Dec 2009</p>
	<p>Promote understanding and awareness of different ways of life in the borough and continue to challenge</p>	<p>Continue to promote understanding and awareness of different ways of life in the borough and continue to challenge prejudice and discrimination through East End Life.</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	prejudice and discrimination.	Continue to deliver a programme of arts and events that celebrates the diversity of Tower Hamlets	Head of Communications	
	Improve communication and transparency of process to address perceptions of unfairness and competition for resources between communities.	Use corporate and service level communication mechanisms to further enhance the way in which decisions about funding and resource allocation is communicated to residents.	Head of Arts Head of Communications	Ongoing
Consultation and Participation	Further enhance consultation and involvement mechanisms to engage BME communities, paying particular attention to smaller minority communities and the diversity within larger BME communities.	Adapt participation performance targets to ensure that they identify specific underrepresented ethnic groups rather than 'BME' categories by March 2010 Undertake mapping of engagement and consultation with the Somali community across THP by July 09; and implement recommendations by March 2010 Establish up-to-date information about third sector BME organisations operating in the borough for consultation and involvement activities. Work with Praxis to establish models of engagement with smaller minority communities	Head Participation & Engagement Team Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities	March 2010 March 2010 March 2010
Community development	Further support and strengthen the capacity of BME third sector in Tower Hamlets paying particular attention to smaller and more	Complete mapping exercise of third sector provision Deliver capacity building programme for third sector organisations	D&R External Funding	March 2010

<p>Democratic participation</p>	<p>isolated sections of the BME community. Strengthen the capacity of local councillors to lead all sections of the local community and get them actively involved in their neighbourhoods and local decision making.</p>	<p>Implement Councillor Call for Action Implement programme of Council/Cabinet/Committee meetings in Community Venues and pilot webcasting project Develop local response to the 'Communities in Control' White Paper – proposals drafted for April 2009 and action plan delivered throughout 09/10</p>	<p>Service Head- Democratic Services Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>April 2009 from May 2009 April 2010</p>
<p>Customer Access</p>	<p>Improve the representation of smaller BME communities and BME women in the democratic process and other local decision making structures. Improve understanding of current language needs and tailor the way in which we communicate with people who cannot speak English to ensure that interpreting and translation is able to improve access to services. Improve customer access for smaller minority communities</p>	<p>Deliver Future Women Councillors training programme Explore potential to apply the lessons learnt from this programme to smaller minority groups who are under-represented in the democratic process. Review the effectiveness of the Council's interpreting and translation provision to improve access to services and communication with residents who face language barriers. Explore the potential for joint interpreting and translation arrangements with partners. Work with Praxis to better understand the barriers to access for smaller minority communities and develop a model for improving access to services.</p>	<p>Service Head- Democratic Services Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010 March 2010 March 2010</p>

	<p>Ensure the workforce to reflect the community strategy includes initiatives to engage smaller BME communities, particularly in frontline services.</p> <p>Improve access to culturally inclusive and accessible ESOL provision</p>	<p>See section on 'promoting equality as an employer'</p> <p>Deliver the ESOL for Tower Hamlets Residents WNF Funded programme which is part of a number of partnership projects supporting employability and skills and tackling worklessness. The programme begins in April 2009</p> <p>Review the Adult Learning Strategy and work with other partners to revise and publish a unified Adult Learning and Skills Strategy</p>	Customer Access	<p>Idea Store Learning Development Manager</p> <p>April 2009 start</p> <p>By July 2009</p>
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A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

<p>Improve the economic inactivity rates amongst the Bangladeshi and Somali community paying attention to the particular barriers that women from these communities face.</p> <p>Make employment services available in community settings, targeting workless families, ensuring that specific communities currently facing exclusion are targeted.</p>	<p>Measure and monitor the impact of the Working Neighbourhood Fund by diversity groups at both registration and outcome stages on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Continue the City Strategy initiative to develop a family focussed approach to tackling worklessness by integrating employment related activity into family and parental engagement (600 residents into employment - March 2010)</p>	Access to Employment Manager	Access to Employment Manager	March 2010	March 2010
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	<p>Develop an up-to-date and detailed understanding of the profile and causation of worklessness among BME communities in the borough.</p>	<p>Publish "worklessness assessment" as part of the preparation of the Economic Assessment evidence base.</p>	<p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
<p>Improve the under-representation of BME communities in key employment sectors by promoting the best practice in relation workforce to reflect the community and encouraging and working with major organisations in the borough to adopt similar initiatives.</p>	<p>Promote activities and develop programmes through the Docklands HR Initiative and the Dockland Business Forum</p> <p>Publish more widely the outcomes of Skillsmatch/JCP and 3rd sector employment schemes</p>	<p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
<p>Maximise employment, placement, apprenticeship and training opportunities amongst workless people in the public sector, building on existing good practice within the Council and Health services.</p>	<p>Expanding apprentice scheme to 200 local young people by 2011 (HR)</p> <p>Increase the number of public sector apprenticeships by 50</p> <p>Hold joint event with JCP to increase employment in the Public Sector.</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Workforce Strategy & Equalities</p> <p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Workforce Strategy & Equalities</p> <p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>March 2011</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p>
<p>Support qualified BME residents to better access professional jobs</p>	<p>Implement the action plan within the Employment Strategy</p> <p>Deliver the Employment Strategy to ensure that Tower Hamlets residents access new and existing jobs and thereby reduce the</p>	<p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>Access to Employment Manager</p>	<p>March 2011</p>

		numbers of people on out of work benefits			
	Improve the qualification and skills levels of Bangladeshi and Somali adults in Tower Hamlets.	Review the Adult Learning Strategy and work with other partners to revise and publish a unified Adult Learning and Skills Strategy	Idea Store Learning Development Manager	July 2009	
	Raise both aspirations and skills of BME children and young people make successful transitions from education to work through more effective learning, advice and guidance and support.	Reduce levels of youth unemployment by agreeing a 14-19 sector pathway to employment with local employers, linked to all 14 Diploma lines of learning, and provide targeted learning programmes for each significant group of 14-18 learners at risk of becoming NEET	Service Head- Young People and Learning	March 2010	
	Address the specific under-achievement of white and Somali communities across all Key Stages. Address the under-achievement of white, Caribbean and Bangladeshi boys particularly at Key Stage 4.	Identify the lowest achieving 20% of pupils, target evidence based intervention and extended school support appropriately, and rigorously track them.	National Secondary Strategy Manager Head of Ethnic Minority Achievement School Development Adviser-Primary Head of Community Language Service	March 2011	
	Continue to improve the representation of BME teachers in local schools paying particular attention to	To increase the percentage of BME teachers to 30% (currently 29.2%). Encourage more members of the Somali	Development Mgr for Schools Equalities Initiative	Feb 2010	

	promote teaching as a career to smaller minority communities.	community to consider teaching as a career by targeted campaigning.	
	Increase the percentage of BME teachers moving into leadership positions	Deliver a pilot management development programme for 24 BME teachers. The first cohort to consist of twelve teachers aspiring to become managers and a second cohort of twelve existing middle managers wanting to move into senior leadership.	Development Mgr for Schools Equalities Initiative Feb 2010

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE			
	Overcrowding: Reduce levels of overcrowding and work in partnership to minimise the wider impacts of over-crowding.	D&R: Housing Strategy Implement the recommendations of the Overcrowding Pathfinder Update Report. Produce an Overcrowding Strategy and undertake an accompanying EqIA	Sept 2009 March 2010
	Demand and Affordability: Improve understanding of the future housing demand and needs of BME communities in the borough and ensure that they effectively inform the planning of future housing provision.	Review the Lettings Policy with particular reference to the current/ future needs of the BME communities	Dec 2009
	Access: Ensure there is equal access to social housing for BME communities facing language barriers or may find it more difficult to understand the system.	Undertake Equality Impact Assessment of Choice Based Lettings	March 2010

		frontline leisure services.	July 2010
The PCT and Leisure services to work in partnership to promote health lifestyles and encourage physical activity amongst BME groups who suffer the highest preventable health risks.	Working in partnership with PCT, refresh Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, including specific focus on under-represented groups.	Service Head Commissioning & Strategy	

A SAFE & SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Victims and perpetrators of crime	Work with strategies to support victims and perpetrators of crime to respond to the over-representation of Black and Asian men as perpetrators and victims of some crimes.	Implement the Youth Crime Action Plan, identifying disaffected young people on the edges of crime, and working with them their families, and schools to re-engage them with the community Propose policy issue to CDRP for consideration at the autumn review process (as it is currently too late to for this upcoming year's CDRP). Develop and implement actions that emerge from the review process in the CDRP Action Plan for 2010/11	Youth Offending Team Police/Victim Support. Philippa Chipping, Policy & Victims, Community Safety Service, CLC	Autumn 2009
Stop and search	Demonstrate fairness and transparency of process in the application of stop and search in Tower Hamlets.	Work with the Diversity and Equality Network to equality impact assess the application of stop and search in Tower Hamlets to demonstrate fairness and transparency and improve public confidence.	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities	March 2010
Hate Crime	Ensure that victims of race hate crime have access to appropriate protection and support and prevent race hate through promoting	Race and Hate Interagency Forum (RHIAF) Action Plan sets out how the partnership will tackle Race Hate Incidents. Key actions for the HCPPT are as follows:	LBTH CSS Hate Crime Policy & Partnership Team	March 2010

	<p>awareness, encouraging reporting and building community cohesion across all communities.</p>	<p>Maintain and develop the Third Party Reporting Project to increase reporting of hate incidents and foster effective joint working amongst partner agencies involved where 100% of Third Party Reports monitored and actioned (baseline of 18).</p> <p>If funding confirmed commission specialist hate crime victim support services where 100% of hate incidents reported to Police are contacted and 50% engaged with service.</p> <p>Implement recommendations from Hate Crime Victim's Needs Research Report for increased satisfaction with services by victims of hate crime measured through satisfaction questionnaires.</p> <p>work with partners in ensuring race hate incidents are recorded effectively.</p> <p>work with partners to ensure 100% of identified perpetrators of race hate incidents reported to the Council are actioned.</p> <p>work with partners to ensure 38% sanction detection rate for perpetrators of race hate (This target is to be achieved by the Police).</p> <p>Coordinate Hate Incidents Panel - multi-agency panel which ensures a coordinated response to all race hate incidents reported to Council.</p>		
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Domestic violence	Continue to deliver and further develop culturally appropriate responses to domestic violence.	<p>If funding confirmed maintain and develop the No Place for Hate Champions Project where 3 targeted hate crime training, workshops and outreach activities delivered per Champion.</p> <p>Deliver awareness campaign promoting clear messages that Tower Hamlets is No Place for Hate including Race Hate – 100% increase in sign up to NPFH Pledge (baseline of 50), 24 outreach activities (including BME, refugee, newcomer communities and events) and Evaluation Report.</p> <p>Update public information leaflet on Forced Marriage to reflect new legislation.</p> <p>Ensure that Warrior Women programmes continue to reach target communities including new migrant communities and Somali women</p>	Maryam Rouf, Domestic Violence Team, Community Safety Service, CLC	Sept 2010
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A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Healthy lifestyles:	<p>Healthy lifestyles and smoking cessation: Further tailor specifically targeted culturally appropriate health campaigns to improve awareness of specific health risks and promote healthy lifestyles among specific BME groups who experience serious health risks</p>	<p>Employ a Young People's Alcohol Health Improvement Officer to provide training for teachers and youth workers to be able to deliver alcohol awareness messages to young people</p> <p>Prevent young people from taking up smoking by enforcing the law on underage sales of cigarettes and extending peer led approaches to smoking prevention.</p> <p>Issues to be picked working in partnership with PCT and refresh of Joint Strategic Needs</p>	Peer Work Development Worker, CS Service Head Commissioning &	July 2010
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Drugs	<p>Continue to improve access to treatment services amongst different BME communities and develop initiatives to reach out to under-represented groups and BME women</p> <p>Develop culturally appropriate strategies to work with BME families in the safeguarding young people from getting involved in drug misuse and support families experiencing drug addiction.</p>	<p>Analysis, including specific focus on under-represented groups.</p> <p>Evaluate treatment system to ensure it meets the needs of all sections of Tower Hamlets diverse community (DAAT TP)</p> <p>Re-structure of DIP Service to improve access and engagement in treatment for all DIP clients (DAAT TP)</p> <p>Improved data recording and analysis of effectiveness of Drug Interventions Programme (DAAT TP)</p> <p>Identify early hidden pockets of drug and alcohol misuse in different communities educating target groups of young people in school and their parents</p> <p>Implement the Youth Crime Action Plan, identifying disaffected young people on the edges of crime, and working with them their families, and schools to re-engage them with the community</p> <p>Improve co-ordination and delivery of education and awareness in the community, schools and in LAPs (DAAT TP)</p> <p>Improve communication and publicity of</p>	<p>Drug & Alcohol Action Team, Community Safety Service, CLC</p> <p>Drug & Alcohol Action Team, Community Safety Service, CLC</p> <p>Drug Action Team Youth Inclusion Programme Youth Offending Team Police/Victim Support.</p> <p>Drug & Alcohol Action Team, Community Safety Service, CLC</p>	<p>Mar 2010</p> <p>Jun 2009 Mar 2010</p> <p>Mar 2010</p>
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	community, and associated harm on different BME communities locally.	DAAT services and initiatives to both internal and external partners (DAAT TP)	
Mental health:	Mental health: Improve the understanding of mental health needs of BME communities and strengthen the accessibility and delivery of mental health services to the BME community.	<p>Deliver services in more accessible settings in the community such as Children's centres, schools and GP surgeries</p> <p>Working in partnership with PCT, refresh Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, including specific focus on under-represented groups.</p> <p>Implement Somali Needs Assessment Action Plan completed in March 2009</p>	<p>Children's Centres Strategic Manager</p> <p>Service Head Commissioning & Strategy (AHWB)</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Learning disabilities:	Continue to develop a fuller understanding of the picture of learning disabilities at a local level within the Bangladeshi and smaller BME communities to better inform future commissioning plans.	<p>Through JSNA establish systematic approach to needs assessment for learning disabilities including both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Borough / community level, public health information ▪ Aggregation of information from individual person-centred plans. 	<p>Katharine Marks, Cheryl Spencer AHWB</p> <p>March 2011</p>
Older people	Develop a fuller understanding of the implications of a growing older Bangladeshi population on health and adult social care	Working in partnership with PCT, refresh Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, including specific focus on under-represented groups.	<p>Service Head Older People & Homelessness</p> <p>July 2010</p>
Carers	Improve understanding of the barriers that BME carers face and increase their access to support.	Ensure that the understanding of carers needs within BME communities informs the Carers Strategy 2008-11 Action Plan.	<p>Service Head Older People & Homelessness</p> <p>March 2011</p>

PROMOTING EQUALITY AS AN EMPLOYER

<p>Improve the representation of Bangladeshi and Somali staff in the organisation across the directorates</p>	<p>Implement findings from Equality Impact Assessment of career progression and evaluation of positive action initiatives that apply to Bangladeshi and Somali staff</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Workforce Strategy & Equalities</p>	<p>During 2009/10</p>
<p>Examine and address the under-representation of BME staff at management level within the organisation.</p>	<p>Outline proposals in Workforce to Reflect the Community report to Cabinet</p>		<p>April 2009</p>
<p>Act on the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment of career progression for Council staff.</p>	<p>Agree actions with Corporate Equalities Steering Group, trade unions and other appropriate groups.</p>		<p>July 2009</p>
<p>Continue to provide targeted learning and development opportunities for BME staff and review the impact of existing BME targeted initiatives to ensure that they are successfully developing and progressing staff.</p>	<p>Build on established social work progression models for other hard to recruit professions Expand apprenticeship schemes and adopt an 'employer-led approach' to apprenticeships. Improve opportunities for staff to undertake secondments and acting up opportunities Evaluate existing positive action initiatives and recommend improvements required</p>		<p>During 2009/10</p>
<p>Investigate the over-representation of black staff facing dismissal under the Disciplinary Procedure.</p>	<p>Review most recent Race Equality Scheme Employment Monitoring Report Present analysis and recommendations to</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Human Resources</p>	<p>June 2009 July 2009</p>

	Corporate Equalities Steering Group	Head of Corporate Human Resources	May 2009
<p>Review the Organisational Change Procedure in respect of how the impact of re-structures on different staff groups is given appropriate consideration.</p> <p>Continue to support and develop the Council's BME Staff Forum.</p>	<p>Review the Organisational Procedure and consult with Trade Union representatives and other appropriate groups.</p> <p>Implement revised procedure (in line with HR Improvement Project timescales that are developed)</p> <p>Coordinate and support quarterly BME Staff Forum meetings</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p> <p>Head of Corporate Human Resources</p>	<p>During 2009/10</p> <p>On-going</p>

**Tower Hamlets
Age Equality Scheme
2009 - 2012**

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Executive Summary

This is the Council's first Age Equality Scheme and it aims to ensure that all Tower Hamlets residents, regardless of their age receive a fair access to services appropriate to their needs. We are a unique borough in terms of our age profile, with 30% of our population aged less than 19 years and only 8% aged over 65 years. A large majority of our young people come from BME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) backgrounds, the reverse of which is true for our older population.

There are a number of pieces of legislation regarding young and older people including the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 Act and the Children's Act (2004). Statutory guidance includes the National Service Framework for Older People (2001) and Fair Access to Care Services (2002). Young and older people are also included in other legislation such as the Human Rights Act (1998). The forthcoming Single Equalities Bill will place similar duties on local authorities to promote age equality as already exist for race, disability and gender.

Although this is our first Age Equality Scheme the Council has already achieved a number of successes in its work to support young and older people. This is facilitated by our excellent Children's and Adults Services which have both been rated as outstanding over the past two years. Key achievements include being the most improved Borough for educational outcomes, the innovative Link Age Plus centres for our residents aged 50+ and recent Beacon Awards for our work to tackle child poverty and promote positive engagement with older people.

This equality scheme identifies the Council's priorities for our young and older residents in relation to the five community plan themes of One Tower Hamlets, A Prosperous Community, A Safe & Supportive Community, A Healthy Community and A Great Place to Live. By working with our partners, we can deliver better services for our young and older residents. It also identifies our priorities as an employer.

The four key cross-cutting priorities are:

- Tackling economic deprivation for both young and older people
- Building cohesive communities, including enhancing inter-generational understanding
- Reducing the number of NEET (not in education, employment or training) young people
- Reducing fear of crime

Introduction

The Council's vision and that of the Tower Hamlets Partnership is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets.

Everyone should realise their full potential in Tower Hamlets. The 2020 Community Plan outlines our aspiration of 'One Tower Hamlets'. One Tower Hamlets is about reducing the inequalities and poverty that we see around us, strengthening cohesion and making sure our communities continue to live well together. Most of all, One Tower Hamlets is about recognising that we all have a part to play in making this a reality.

One way of ensuring this vision is to focus our attention on inequalities experienced by our residents. The Council has been awarded Level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and is one of the best Councils in the country for its equalities work. This Age Equality Scheme, along with others for gender, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion/belief will enable us to provide services and develop policies and strategies which ensure that we provide for equality for all. We plan to combine these schemes into a single Equality Scheme in 2010 to best serve the individual needs of each of our residents. This reflects the move nationally towards a single Equalities Bill.

We recognise that the working age population may experience specific disadvantages due to their age, such as problems in accessing services which may be only available during working hours. However, it is young and older people who are more likely to experience significant discrimination due to their age. Attitudes and beliefs about young and older people can lead to them to be socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that young and older people have the right to equality and opportunity and make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large. As such, this first Age Equality Scheme will primarily focus on their needs and priority issues.

We are already doing significant work to tackle the particular inequalities faced by young and older people. The Children and Young People's Plan and the Best Value Review on Older People as Citizens set out key priorities to tackle the specific needs of young and older people.

This Scheme will ensure that age equality is delivered by multiple services across the Council, not just those which work specifically with and for young and older people. We aim to put in place policies and services which will enable everyone to access our services, regardless of their age, and to improve outcomes for all. We also want to ensure that young and older people have choice and control in decisions affecting their lives.

Key priorities

Within each of the Council's Equality Schemes we have identified three priority areas of inequality which require significant and sustained action

across a number of Council services. These priority areas provide the Council with a focus about where attention and resources need to be targeted to make real progress. Our cross-cutting priorities table can be found in the Appendix to this Scheme.

In relation to age inequality, these priorities are set out below and are explored further in this Equality Scheme. Linked to poverty, all three sit at heart of inequality in Tower Hamlets. To make a dramatic shift against the inequality in our borough and make progress on the wide range of issues identified in each of the Equality Schemes, it is recommended that investment to address these four core inter-connected areas will lead that change.

- Tackling economic deprivation for both young and older people
- Building cohesive communities, including enhancing inter-generational understanding
- Reducing the number of NEETs
- Reducing fear of crime

Age Equality Legislation

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 Act outlawed discrimination on the grounds of age in the areas of employment and vocational training. This Act does not cover discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services.

It is expected that the forthcoming Equality Bill will pave the way to extend this protection beyond the workplace, covering public and private sector services, and will outlaw age discrimination in the provision of goods and services.

The Children's Act (2004) sets out the legislative duties outlined in the Every Child Matters framework which sets guidance on ensuring equality of opportunity for all children and young people.

There is also statutory guidance prohibiting discrimination against older people in health and social care; namely the National Service Framework for Older People (2001) and Fair Access to Care Services (2002).

The Human Rights Act (1998) sets out the right of everybody to have access to public services and the right to be treated fairly and with dignity. It includes the right to being safe and protected from harm and the right to take an active part in your community and society which have particular implications for our work with young and older people. It prohibits discrimination on a wide range of grounds and case law has extended this to include age.

Definitions of Age

We recognise that understanding who 'young people' and 'older people' are can be confusing for services as different public and voluntary sector bodies categorise age in a variety of ways.

The Council defines young people as those who are under the age of 18. However, we recognise that the youth service extends its provision to those aged up to 19 and will work with young adults up to the age of 25 who have additional needs such as disabilities.

The Council understands older people as those who are aged 65 years and older, or as soon as their needs are age – related. This recognises that some residents may experience the detrimental effects of ageing at a younger age than others, such as those with learning disabilities.

How we developed our Age Equality Scheme

The development of our Scheme has been led by the Corporate Scrutiny and Equalities Team. This has been supported by officers from the Corporate Equalities Steering Group (CESG) who are the key equalities representatives from each Directorate. The development of the scheme has followed a clear project plan, the steps of which are outlined below:

Gathering Baseline Information

A comprehensive baseline exercise was undertaken using a combination of research and input from staff across the Council including analysis of demographic and statistical information, analysis of existing consultation and a review of relevant Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs).

Consultation Exercises

From the baseline information we were able to identify a number of areas for further examination and discussion. To test our findings and to gain further input as to which areas should be our priorities, we undertook a number of consultation activities with residents, voluntary and statutory agencies and members of staff.

Setting Priorities and Objectives

Using feedback from our consultation and baseline exercises, a number of key themes for priority and overarching activity have emerged.

Corporate Framework for Diversity and Equality

Delivery framework

Valuing diversity is one of the four core values of Tower Hamlets Council. We promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve the life for everybody living, working and visiting Tower Hamlets. We will build upon this by working with the Tower Hamlets Partnership to provide accessible and responsive services that enable everyone to take part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough. Achieving this is central to delivering the Council's vision, is linked to the Strategic Plan priorities and objectives and the Community Plan's vision of a cohesive community.

Our aims and values

As a service provider we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the planning and delivery of our services in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status
- Promote good relations between communities and address negative stereotyping of any groups
- Ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process
- Tackle harassment relating to a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status

As an employer we will:

- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for our workforce in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement)
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse nature of the borough

We will recognise our community leadership role and use this to work towards a cohesive community in which inequality is tackled and equality promoted.

Our commitment is supported by a number of legal duties that require us to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, including:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Regulations on Religion and Faith 2004
- Employment Regulations on Sexual Orientation 2003
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Children's Act (2004)

Under current legislation, the requirements to address inequality and discrimination and promote equality vary between equality 'strand'. For example, whilst under current legislation we are required to address discrimination against employees on the basis of all six equality strands, it is only in relation to race, gender and disability that this duty extends to the provision of services and the active promotion of equality. However we believe that we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and inequality exists for individuals and groups belonging to all of the six equality strands. We are therefore committed to going beyond the requirements laid down in law to address all six equality strands and to challenge prejudice and discrimination to promote better understanding and respect between all people.

To demonstrate our commitment to all six equality strands, the Council has gone beyond the legal requirement to produce Equality Schemes in relation to gender, race and disability and has published Schemes covering Religion/Belief, Age and Sexual Orientation equality. Each Scheme sets out what we know about the profile of our community in relation to the relevant strand and the nature of inequality experienced by people as a result of this element of their identity. The Schemes also contain a summary of actions the Council and partners will undertake to address inequality and discrimination in relation to age equality.

How we will deliver our commitment

Tackling discrimination and promoting equality requires action at corporate, directorate, service, team and individual levels. At a corporate level the six Equality Schemes and the overall Diversity and Equality Action Plan identifies priority areas for work on equalities across the organisation. The Diversity and Equality Action Plan is agreed by Cabinet annually and monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at six-monthly intervals, along with a summary of progress on each of the Schemes.

Below we describe the processes and procedures we have put in place to embed the delivery of our commitment to promote equality in relation to all six strands within everything that we do as a Council:

- Undertake **equality impact assessments** of both new and existing policies and services
- Ensure that all our **team plans** incorporate relevant diversity and equality objectives and targets
- Ensure all new staff participate in Council **equality induction training** processes
- Ensure that our policies are compliant with **equality legislation**
- **Involve communities, staff and stakeholders** in the design, review and scrutiny of our services and employment practices
- Increase the extent to which our **workforce reflects the local community**

- Use our **procurement** powers to ensure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy
- **Monitor the equality profile** of people using and benefiting from our services to enable us to identify groups which are not accessing services
- **Provide information and access** to our services in accessible ways

The Profile of Age in Tower Hamlets

Key Facts

- We have one of the youngest populations in the country
- New build initiatives are anticipated to lead to significant increases in the school age population in Tower Hamlets
- We have the third largest percentage of 20 to 34 year olds of all Local Authorities in the country
- Life expectancy in the borough is lower than then national average.
- The majority of our young people are from BME backgrounds, and particularly the Bangladeshi community
- The majority of our older people are from white backgrounds
- The ethnicity of older people is predicted to shift significantly towards BME in future years
- Our young and older people experience high levels of economic deprivation which particularly affects our BME young people, older women and disabled people
- We have limited information on the sexual orientation of young and older people, however, we know that the LGBT community is at particular risk of isolation
- Religion/belief plays an important part in the lives of both young and older people in the borough

The age profile of Tower Hamlets is unusual. Tower Hamlets is a 'young' borough with one of the highest percentages of young people in the country and a much smaller number of older people than national averages and London as a whole.¹

The section below describes what we know about the demographic profile of individuals and groups of people of different ages in the borough, particularly young and older people.

This section is based on information gathered for the 2001 Census and the 2007 ONS update.

Age range

Tower Hamlets has a large percentage of young people in its population. Almost 30% of the population is under the age of 19 whilst the average for London is 18%.

Our working age population reflects the relative youthfulness of the borough.

¹ In 2004 there were 11.6 million people aged under 16 in the UK, a decline of 2.6 million since 1971. *Social Trends 2006*. By 2011, the mean age of the UK population will exceed 40 for the first time; by about 2017/18, there will be more people over 40 than below 40. *ONS 2005/2006*

Tower Hamlets has the third largest percentage (37%) of 20 to 34 year olds of any Local Authority in the country. 59% of the population are 15-44 year olds compared with 42% for this age group in the country as a whole.

In contrast, the borough has a much smaller number of older people than the average. Just 8% of the population are over 65 compared to 16% in the rest of the country.²

Furthermore, life expectancy in the borough is significantly lower than national and London averages. The life expectancy of a man living in Tower Hamlets is 73 years, 9 years less than a man living in Kensington and Chelsea. Within the borough, the life expectancy of a boy born in St Dunstan's and Stepney Green ward is 71.9 years which is 8.4 years less than a boy born in Millwall ward. The poor health of the borough (for example, residents in Tower Hamlets are 63% more likely to die of coronary heart disease than the rest of England) means that it is more likely that our residents experience the detrimental health effects of ageing at a younger age than the rest of the national population.

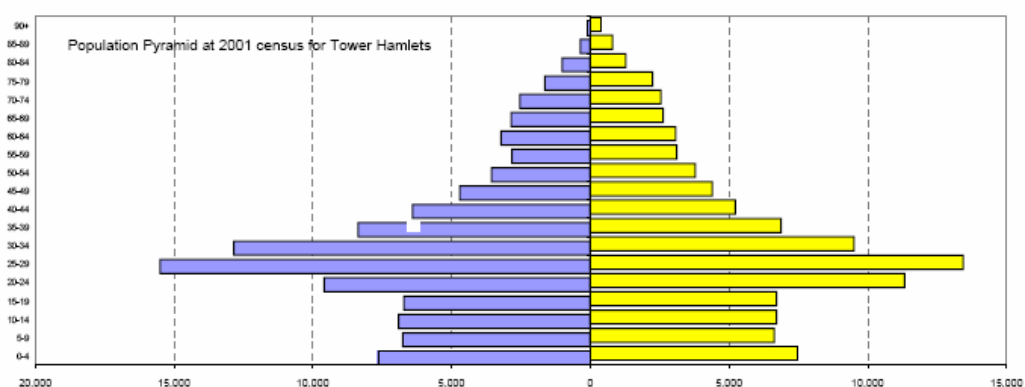


Figure 1. Population Pyramid (2001 Census) showing age spread by gender

Age and Ethnicity

Over 70% of Tower Hamlets residents aged 19 and under are from ethnic minority communities. In contrast, 60% of the White British population are over 30. Of these residents, less than 14% fall in the 0-15 age group.³ The number of Bangladeshi people aged 19 and under is almost double the proportion for all Londoners. However there are a variety of different ethnic groups in the borough including Chinese, Vietnamese and Somali people and over 90 different languages are spoken. Most Bangladeshi children in London were born in the UK, while most adults were born in Bangladesh.

The consultation for preparing this Scheme highlighted the changing demographics of our older population, with an increasing number of

² All figures based on ONS mid-2007 population estimates.

³ ONS *Experimental Population Estimates by Ethnic Group for local authority districts and higher administrative areas in England for 2006*. (2008)

Bangladeshi and Afro-Caribbean older people engaging with statutory and voluntary organisations. Over the next five years, the proportion of older people who are Bangladeshi will steadily increase.

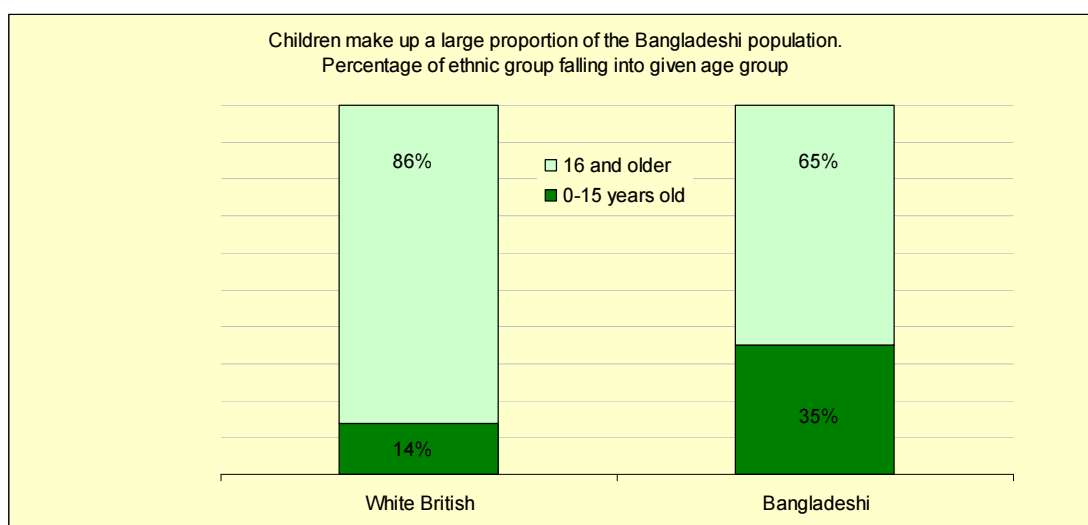


Figure 2. Percentage of the Bangladeshi and White British population falling into given age groups. (Based on ONS mid year revised estimates since 2001 Census)

Age and Disability

The prevalence of disability increases with age. Eight per cent of young Londoners (aged 16-24) are disabled, relative to one third (33 per cent) of those aged 55 to retirement age. The strong association between disability and age is evident for both men and women, though women have slightly higher rates of disability than men across most age groups. Overall, sixteen per cent of women aged 16-59 are disabled, compared to 14 per cent of men aged 16-59.⁴ The data around age and disability for Tower Hamlets is limited; however, we know that the borough has more disabled people than the London average.

Age and Gender

Tower Hamlets has a population where there are 104 males to every 100 females. In the country as a whole there are 97 males to every 100 females.⁵ When looked at by age group the borough's sex ratio shows much greater variation compared to Inner London and London, rising to a high of 138 males to every 100 females for 40-44 year olds.⁶

⁴ GLA *Disabled People and the labour market in London: Key facts* (2007)

⁵ ONS mid-2007 population estimates.

⁶ ONS mid-2007 population estimates.

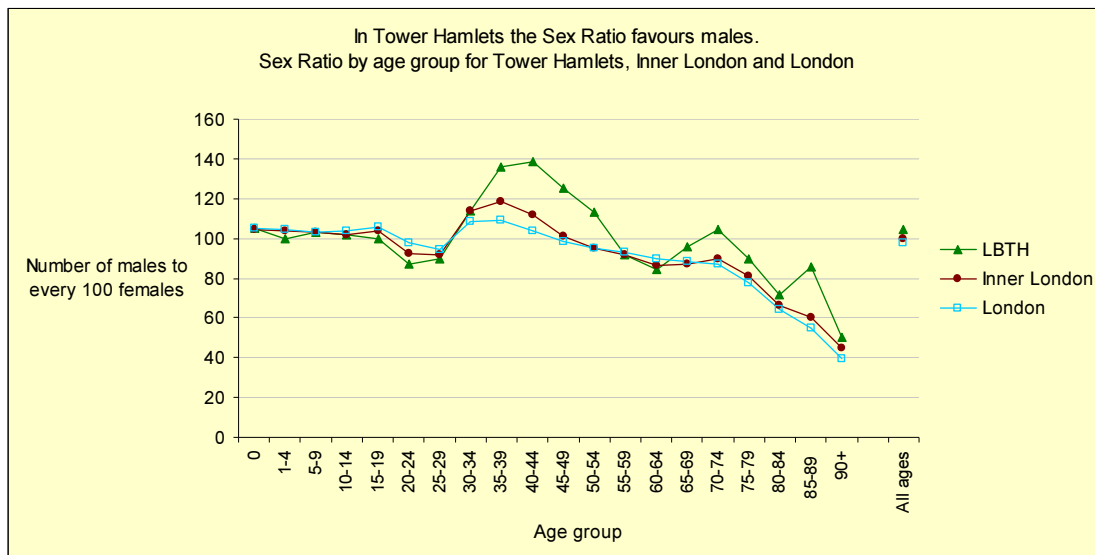


Figure 3. Gender ratio by age group for Tower Hamlets, Inner London and London. (Based on ONS mid year revised estimates since 2001 Census)

Age and Religion/Belief

Across London as a whole, the Muslim population has a much younger age structure than other groups.⁷ This is mirrored in Tower Hamlets where statistics indicate that 61% of the under 15 population are Muslim whereas 21% are Christian. In contrast, amongst the 50+ population, 61% identify as Christian and 19% as Muslim.

Age and Sexual Orientation

It is estimated that 1 in 10 Londoners are lesbian, gay or bisexual. It is likely that this is mirrored across the population of Tower Hamlets and that significant numbers of both older and young people will identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. We currently have very limited data regarding age and sexual orientation but improvements in monitoring are beginning to reveal more data.

Future Projections

There has been significant growth in the local population in the last 10 -15 years and projections suggest this is set to continue. Tower Hamlets is also predicted to have the fastest growing population in London between now and 2026.

The young population profile is set to continue into the future with more children and young people between 5 – 19 years. According to GLA population predictions, increases of over 5,000 in the age five and under category and over 14,000 5-18 year olds are predicted by 2021 across the borough. Children and young people will make up only a slightly increased proportion of the population in the future. New build initiatives are anticipated, leading to a growth in the school age population of the borough.

The biggest increase over the next 5 years will be in the working age population (19 – 65 years old). There will be a growth in the number of older

⁷ GLA Briefing *Key facts for diverse communities: Ethnicity and faith* (2007)

people in the borough, however the number of over 50s will still remain well below the London average and its proportion of the Tower Hamlets population is expected to remain stable up to 2026.

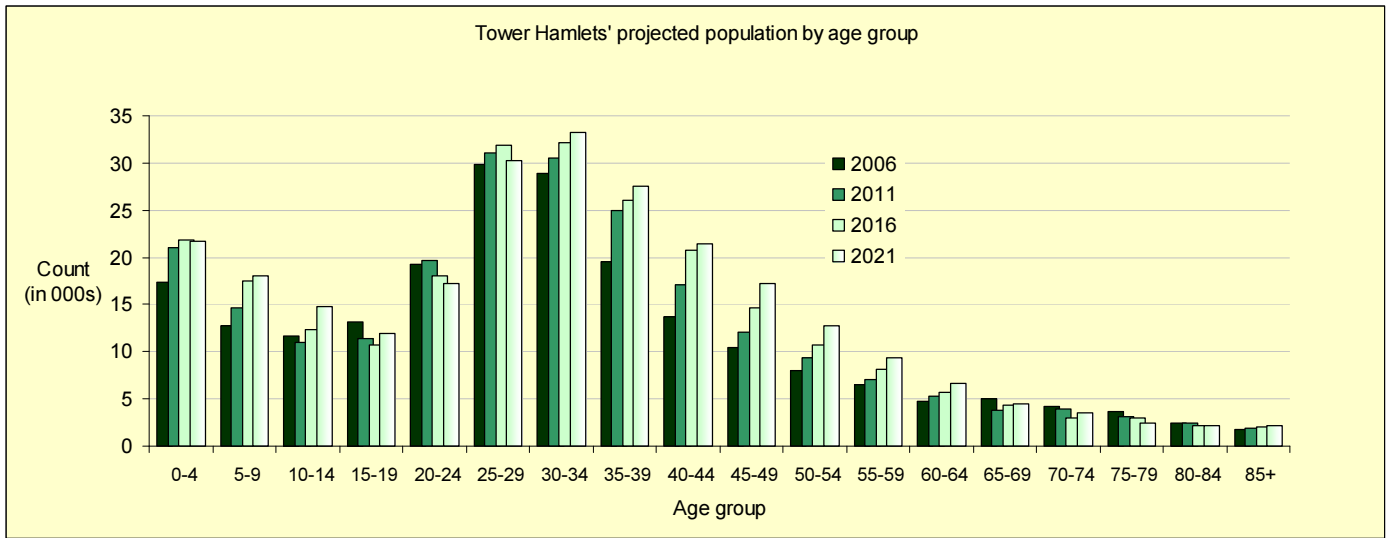


Figure 4. Projected population by age group up to 2021 for Tower Hamlets. (Based on ONS mid year revised estimates since 2001 Census)

Reasonable Adjustments

This section provides guidance about factors to take into account when delivering a service, running an activity or event, providing funding or scheduling meetings to ensure that you promote age equality. It is important to note that these are intended to highlight some of the most common barriers to promotion of age equality. It is not a comprehensive guide to providing an equitable service and it is important that we take a proactive approach to identifying individual needs rather than presuming what we know the best solution. The key principle here is to ensure that it is clear that efforts will be made to accommodate needs and preferences based on age and encourage staff, service users or residents to discuss their needs where they feel there may be a barrier to their access or involvement in an activity.

Have you asked young and/older people what they want?

Young and older people sometimes feel marginalised from the decision making process. As residents who may need a relatively high level of care (from statutory/voluntary services or their family) they want to feel like they have the ability where possible to make decisions about their services and not simply be the recipients of services.

Do your services reflect the individual age-related needs of our residents?

Age-related needs may not be tied to a person's chronological age. Just because someone is a certain age does not mean they will/will not need specific support as we all develop and age differently. Young people develop at different speeds and older people may have need for services at different ages depending on their health-related age needs. For example, a person may need to access dementia care at age 50 or age 70. Young and older residents are as diverse as the rest of our community. As such a one size fits all approach will not always be appropriate.

Is your service accessible not just the building it is in?

Although a service may be provided in an accessible building it does not mean that it is accessible to young and older people who sometimes have particular transportation needs. For both young and older people who may not have access to a car, it is important that venues are close to public transport. For older people in particular, being able to access transport can be a particular issue if they have mobility issues. If an event/activity is intended for older people it is important that due consideration is given to provision of transportation. Older less-mobile people may need door-to-door transport provided in order to enable them to participate.

In our consultation work, both young and older people highlighted their concerns about their personal safety after dark. The research also emphasised that older people sometimes 'timetable' their day to avoid the beginning and end of the school day. Although it is important for the Council to tackle the underlying causes of these fears, it is crucial that services think about appropriate timings of activities and events.

The Story so Far

The Council's targeted work for both young and older people has consistently been top-rated and we are the only Council to have both Adults and Children's Services top-rated for the last two years by the Audit Commission.

Our Children's and Young People's Plan is currently being refreshed and will further develop the work of Children's Services which was recently rated as outstanding by the Joint Area Review (JAR) led by Ofsted.

The Council selected the topic of older people as its cross-cutting Best Value Review for 2005/06 which has instigated improvements in the health and social care of older people and has given older people a voice.

Some of key achievements for young and older people include:

Young People

- 46% of young people voted for their Young Mayor in this year's elections, a record turnout which exceeds the last Council election turnout
- We are the most improved borough for educational outcomes in the country. Our 11 year olds are consistently achieving higher than the national average in English and maths, and GCSE results continue to close the gap with national averages
- Around a third of all young people are in contact with our youth services.
- We have significantly reduced the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- The Family-Nurse partnership pilot intervention project offers tailored support for young parents under 21 years, from pregnancy up until children are three years old
- The Council has received Beacon Awards for school improvement and reducing re-offending (2008) as well as more recent recognition of our work to tackle child poverty (2009)

Older People

- Tower Hamlets Telecare provides a free preventative service to help provide safety, security and wellbeing by enabling people to live independently in their own homes
- The innovative LinkAge Plus offers residents over the age of 50 a range of social and health related activities to maximise their wellbeing and make the most of life through joined up centres which work with the voluntary sector and our public sector partners
- Sonali Gardens residential care home provides 40 places for service users from the Bangladeshi community with culturally sensitive care and recreational social activities
- The Council has recently received a Beacon Award for 'Positive engagement with older people' (2009)

Age Equalities Priorities 2009- 2012

The section below describes what we know about how young and older people experience inequality, discrimination and harassment in Tower Hamlets. This section is organised according to the themes of the Tower Hamlets 2008-20 Community Plan and draws on the ten domains of inequality set out in the Equality Mapping Framework.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS

Building cohesive communities

One of the key findings was the need for improved integration between different ethnicity groups at both day centres and youth centres which can lack cultural diversity.

Consultation findings highlighted the need to promote inter-generational understanding. Some older people expressed fears about young people and some young people felt that they were negatively stereotyped or viewed with unnecessary suspicion. The long-term impact of the economic downturn is unknown but there may be effects if young people are increasingly unable to access employment opportunities.

CASE STUDY: MAGIC ME

The Magic Me programme annually serves around 450 local people from diverse generations, cultures and ethnicities. They run creative projects which bring together young people (aged 9+) and older people (55+) for mutual benefit, learning and enjoyment. The projects address prejudices about ageing, young people and cultural differences. Magic Me challenges negative stereotypes of young people and elders. It particularly seeks to break down the invisible barriers around residential and nursing homes for elders. Through its three year *Our Generations* project individuals and groups across Tower Hamlets are working together to build positive relationships and alliances, challenging misconceptions and prejudices about their generations.

Objectives

- Explore barriers preventing diverse communities mixing in youth clubs and day centres
- Enhance activities that bring people of different backgrounds together
- Promote inter-generational work to tackle older people's fear of groups of young people

A voice for young and older people

Many young and older people expressed the desire to have a great say over decisions made affecting their lives.

Feedback from consultation suggested that young people felt that they were able to engage in democracy through initiatives such as the Young Mayor but expressed a need to have more of a say on issues affecting young people.

Young people felt representation was important as a means of challenging some of the negative stereotypes around young people.

National research has shown that one-third of older people have difficulties participating in public consultations.⁸ This can be particularly the case for those who are housebound. The internet offers enormous potential in engaging older people, especially for those who are housebound or geographically isolated.

CASE STUDY: TOWER HAMLETS' YOUNG MAYOR

The Young Mayor has been elected annually by young people aged 11-18 living, working or studying in Tower Hamlets since 2007. This year's election saw the first ever female young mayor Uma Akhter elected in a turnout of 46%, higher than the council election where turnout was 40%. The Young Mayor's role is to represent young people in Tower Hamlets and sits on a number of committees including the Partnership Board and UK Youth Parliament.

Objectives

- Develop strategies for consulting with housebound older people
- Investigate ways to increase older people's participation in democracy
- Further enhance the engagement of young people in local democracy
- Improve consultation with young people
- Improve inclusion of the voices of disabled children and young people

⁸ Help the Aged *RoAD Report* (2007)

A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

“By 2020 the huge economic growth in Canary Wharf and elsewhere in the borough will be a vital factor in securing improvements for local people. Support for local enterprise and partnership working with both large and small businesses will help ensure that employment opportunities are available and that local people have the skills and training they need to get them. Tackling the problem of worklessness, which is widespread in many of our communities, is a key priority for Tower Hamlets. Our young people will learn from the best teachers and successfully gain qualifications that allow them to pursue their career goals. Taking advantage of the 2012 Olympic Games and its legacy, by 2020, Tower Hamlets will be recognised as a place with highly skilled ambitious communities and where entrepreneurship and local enterprise is successful.”

- Tower Hamlets Community Plan

Ending child and pensioner poverty

Tower Hamlets is the 3rd poorest borough in the country and has the highest levels of child poverty in England. In 2004, 47% of children were living in a household in receipt of benefits (though this proportion has actually been decreasing since 2002). The proportion of children and young people receiving free school meals is nearly four times the national average. Levels of low income among lone parents are significantly higher in Tower Hamlets than elsewhere in Inner London. Bangladeshi households are far more likely than other groups to be living in poverty. The Tower Hamlets Employment Strategy sets out a framework to tackle some of these complex issues of worklessness and child poverty within the borough.

It is estimated that 1 in 5 pensioners in Britain live below the poverty line.⁹ Tower Hamlets is ranked 7th highest in the country for pensioner poverty and over 50% of those over 65 rely on state benefits to secure a minimum income. Older women and disabled older people are at particular risk of experiencing poverty in retirement due to barriers to employment and low pay during their working lives.¹⁰ Evidence suggests that not all older people are claiming all the benefits to which they are entitled, with only 24 per cent of people over 60 in London as a whole taking up Pension Credit.¹¹

⁹ Department for Work and Pension, *Households Below Average Income 2006/7* (2008)

¹⁰ London Equality Commission *State of Equality in London* (2007)

¹¹ Ibid.

CASE STUDY: BEACON AWARD FOR WORK TO TACKLE CHILD POVERTY

Lincoln and Burdett Children's Centre, which is run by Poplar Harca and based in Mile End East and Bromley by Bow wards, has been delivering a training employment service to parents since 2006. The service is sensitive to locally specific demographic, social and cultural needs and has worked closely with a range of community base partners which have been a key factor in its success. In 2008, 228 eligible job seekers were registered, 29 parents secured work for 6 months or longer, 116 parents were referred to vocational training, 63 referred to academic courses and 8 to Job Centre Plus. Following the success of the Lincoln and Burdett employment and training service we are developing similar support for parents across all 21 Children's Centres in the borough

Objectives

- Improve the economic well being of older people and families
- Enable parents and carers to improve their employability
- Support young people from workless families to improve employability
- Extend advocacy support for older people

Improve educational outcomes

Education is essential if children are to develop the practical and social skills to secure employment and the benefits of economic wellbeing. Although children in Tower Hamlets achieve results in line with national figures at Key Stage 2, by Key Stage 3 they are performing less well (although we are the fastest improving local authority in the country for GCSE results).

Objectives

- Improve the educational outcomes of young people
- Enhance support for young people in their transition from compulsory education into adulthood
- Enhance support for young disabled people in their transition from support by Children's Services to Adult Services

Supporting young people in the economic downturn

The current economic downturn is likely to impact upon the employment opportunities available to our residents. National research has highlighted the likelihood that the reduction of employment opportunities will particularly impact upon young adults entering the workplace for the first time.

The borough already experiences higher than average numbers of young people not in employment, education or training with 8.2% of 16-18 year olds classified as NEET in the period between November 2007 and January 2008. Nationally, the Department for Children, Schools and Families estimates that disabled 16-year olds are twice as likely to be NEET as their non-disabled peers. Evidence also shows that young people who are NEET at 16 are likely to remain disadvantaged and experience the effects of inequality throughout the rest of their lives.

Objectives

- Gather data on impact of economic downturn on young people in Borough
- Enhance the opportunities for young people to get quality work experience in the borough
- Extend advice and support in career development

Provision of cultural and leisure activities

Consultation highlighted a need for youth activities to be sited in areas that are easily accessible to young people. Feedback from consultation with girls and young women highlighted a need for the provision of a more diverse range of activities for young women to participate in at youth clubs. Staff highlighted a lack of female youth workers which may contribute to the feeling amongst young women that they are not well catered for.

Findings reveal that there is a need for more cultural and leisure activities for older men.

Objectives

- Enhance the accessibility of youth centres
- Increase range of activities available to young women
- Enhance support for vulnerable young people to participate in leisure and cultural activities
- Enable young people to access cultural activities
- Improve open space play opportunities
- Enhance range of activities available to older men

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

“By 2020 Tower Hamlets will continue to be a place that attracts people – to settle and raise families, to study, to work in a thriving local economy and enjoy the rich cultural life.”

- Tower Hamlets Community Plan

Reduce overcrowding

For young people and their families over-crowding is a major issue. Tower Hamlets has the highest rate of overcrowding in London. According to the Department of Communities and Local Government, overcrowding in Council-owned housing is the highest in London (24%). Lack of amenities and overcrowding are associated with poor health – both physical and mental – and with impact on young people’s educational achievement. Tower Hamlets already delivers a comparatively large amount of affordable housing (over 1,000 affordable homes in 2007/08 – more than any other Council) but even more progress is needed.

Objectives

- Increase the supply of affordable family housing

Supporting independent living

Over 70% of pensioner households live in social housing in Tower Hamlets. Some older tenants have real concerns about the condition of their homes and difficulties in accessing basic adaptations to enable them to continue living independently.

Consultation with staff and third sector providers indicated that there is a need for clear, accurate and well-publicised information regarding what services are available for older people in the borough to enable older people to live as independently as possible. There will be an increasing need for independent advocacy for vulnerable older people who will be allocated personal budgets in order to guard against elder abuse. Older residents who do not speak English or who suffer from dementia will need specific support and increased advocacy.

Residents highlighted the importance high quality and appropriate care can play in enabling older people to stay in their own home and maintain levels of independence. Our findings suggested that older people wanted a more flexible approach in understanding their needs, taking into account an individual’s preferences. The personalisation of older people’s care is set to impact radically on the way in which we provide services and will enable older people to live independently in accordance with their individual preferences.

Access to appropriate and accessible transportation was highlighted in several consultation activities as an enabling factor in supporting older people’s independent living. The Best Value Review revealed that the take up of Freedom Passes amongst pensioners in Tower Hamlets is lower than in other comparable local authorities.

CASE STUDY: TOWER HAMLETS TELECARE SERVICE

The telecare service helps provide safety, security and wellbeing by enabling people to live independently in their own homes. The service is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year and uses simple technology linked to our response centre. Sensors include flood, smoke, gas, fall and carbon monoxide detectors. The Council provides this service free of charge to vulnerable adults and older people.

Objectives

- Improve the extent to which older people can remain in their own homes throughout their lifetime
- Implement transformation of social care through personalisation
- Ensure that older people are supported in the transition to personalised budgets
- Enhance provision of advocacy and advice to older people, particularly those who may be vulnerable or 'hard to reach'
- Improve the accessibility of public transportation, particularly in the run up to the 2012 Olympic Games

Out and about

Our consultation has highlighted the need for more free accessible public toilets in the borough. According to a recent nationwide survey by Help the Aged, 52% of respondents agreed that the lack of public toilets in their local area prevented them from going out as often as they would like. By providing greater access to toilets across the borough, older people, parents and people with health problems or disabilities are able to maintain a more active lifestyle and confidently enjoy the local environment.

The perceived lack of effective lighting and worries about uneven pavements have a limiting affect on older people's activities outside the home after dark due to fears around personal safety and vulnerability to falls.

Objectives

- Enhance the provision of free accessible public toilets in the Borough
- Ensure redevelopment creates 'safe' environments particularly at night

A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

“By 2020 we want Tower Hamlets to be a place where all residents and visitors feel safe and confident in their homes and on the streets. Services will ensure that everyone, particularly the vulnerable, is protected from risk of harm and is enabled to live a full and independent life. Parents and families will get the support they need to give children the best possible start in life.”

- Tower Hamlets Community Plan

Reducing fear of crime

Overall crime in Tower Hamlets has dropped over 24% between 2003/04 and 2007/08. Yet concern about crime, as measured by our Annual Residents' Survey, has increased over the past 2 years.

In our consultation activities, many young people expressed fear of crime and were particularly worried about knife crime and were most likely to feel that anti-social behaviour has got worse over the last three years.

Objectives

- Increase older and young people's confidence to go out after dark
- Reduce older and young people's fear of crime

Tackling anti-social behaviour

Tower Hamlets is fortunate: levels of violence here are significantly lower than in many boroughs, and in particular we have low levels of gun and knife crime.

Consultation activities have highlighted the need to reassure older and young people about anti-social behaviour in their area. Our findings highlighted the need to address older people's perceptions around young people and anti-social behaviour.

Young people are more likely to be victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. We know that young men, particularly those from Asian or Black backgrounds, are overrepresented as recipients of enforcement action.

Objectives

- Tackle negative perceptions of young people, particularly their association with anti-social behaviour
- Monitor impact of anti-social behaviour measures on young men, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

“By 2020, local residents will live long and fulfilled lives, aware of how their lifestyle choices affect their own and their family’s health and wellbeing. All will be able to access high quality health and social care in their communities. Health care will focus on health promotion and prevention as fewer residents will need acute long-time care for avoidable health concerns. We will use the power of the 2012 Games to promote more active lifestyles.”

- Tower Hamlets Community Plan

Mental and emotional health

The Government’s Mental Health Needs Index shows that Tower Hamlets has a 40% greater demand for mental health services compared to the national average. Consultation activities have highlighted the need for improved provision of mental and emotional services for older and young people.

Isolation of Older People

43% of older people in Tower Hamlets live alone.¹² Their isolation exacerbates any threats posed to their well-being by poverty and their housing condition, and increases the risk of poor mental and emotional health, particularly for those who are housebound.

Loneliness and isolation is a particular risk for older men, especially from white, black and mixed race ethnic groups. Older lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are 2.5 times as likely to live alone and 4.5 times as likely to have no children to call upon in times of need.

Young people’s mental health

Young people in the borough have highlighted mental health as their top health priority. In 2004, one in ten children and young people nationally aged 5–16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder.¹³ Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds are at increased risk of experiencing poor mental health. Gay and lesbian young people are over-represented in statistics on self-harm, depression and suicide.¹⁴

Objectives

- Improve mental health services available to older people
- Increase awareness of mental health issues for older and young people
- Enhance measures to tackle the social isolation of older people with particular focus on older men and LGBT older people
- Improve the accessibility of mental health services for young people
- Target provision at specific groups not accessing mental health services

Dementia

¹² ONS, *Census* (2001).

¹³ ONS, *Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain* (2004)

¹⁴ *Mind Children, young people and mental health factsheet*

Dementia is not a natural consequence of ageing. A great deal can be done to help people overcome the problems of dementia, to prevent crises and to improve the quality of life of all involved.

According to the Alzheimer Society, approximately 1,500 people in Tower Hamlets have dementia.¹⁵ Many more are affected by its impact on their elderly relatives of whom 40% will have continuous support needs. Nationally, the number of people with dementia is predicted to rise by 150% over the next 50 years. People with learning disabilities who develop dementia generally will be of a younger age group and may have needs which services designed for people 30 or 40 years older find hard to meet.

Objectives

- In partnership with the PCT and East London NHS Foundation Trust develop a strategy to meet the needs of people with dementia and their carers including better assessments, early diagnosis and long-term support and care

Active opportunities for older people

Many of the frailties associated with old age are not inevitable and a more enabling environment could sustain health and mobility well into the 80s.¹⁶

Feedback from residents indicated that there is a need to ensure that sports and leisure facilities are welcoming and accessible to older people. Older people who are housebound are particularly limited in their opportunities to engage in physical activity. The availability of appropriate transportation and timings sensitive to older people's needs impact upon whether an older person will engage in physical activities.

Ensuring that open spaces feel safe and accessible for older people is important for their health and wellbeing as they provide a free space for exercise and relaxation.

CASE STUDY: LINK AGE PLUS

The Link Age Plus centres across the borough provide an integrated network of services that are easily accessible and provide a holistic response to the needs of older adults. Link Age Plus centres provide activities, such as exercise, dance, health promotion, IT classes and welfare advice sessions, as well as social events such as coffee mornings and knitting groups. The focus is on improving the quality of life of older residents and empowering individuals to take more control of their lives.

Objectives

- Improve access to leisure facilities
- Develop exercise opportunities for housebound older people

¹⁵ Alzheimer's Research Trust (2003), *"A Biological and Socio-Economic Assessment of the Consequences"*, Alzheimer's Research Trust

¹⁶ Forster, *AgeShift: The New Marketing Mindset* (Autumn 2006), p5

- Enhance older people's feelings of safety in open spaces

Tackling childhood obesity

Childhood obesity levels in Tower Hamlets are above average both for London and nationally. In 2006/7 obesity rates in Reception Year were the third highest in the country. 20% of children are obese and one third overweight.¹⁷ Feedback from consultation highlighted a concern to improve the number of healthy eating options in the borough, particularly healthier fast food.

Young people highlighted the need for enhanced opportunities to engage in exercise and sporting activities. Parks and open spaces must be developed and improved to provide for social, educational and recreational needs of young people.

Objectives

- Provide increased support for walking and cycling
- Improve the choices of healthy food available
- Enhance the skills, knowledge and confidence of families to live healthily
- Expand targeted and specialist provision to support children and families with identified weight management needs

¹⁷ LB Tower Hamlets, *Improving Health and Well-being Strategy 2006-11*

Promoting Age Equality as an Employer

Recruitment and selection

The Council is committed to promoting equality as an employer. In order to ensure that all forms of discrimination are eradicated, regular analysis is undertaken in respect of recruitment activity as well as levels of retention across age ranges. Furthermore, reviews of employee progression by age are another method by which the Council is able to monitor equality of opportunity. Youth training schemes are run for local residents aged between 16 and 24 years of age and, at the other end of the spectrum, some employees over 65 years continue to work for the Council.

Many staff members emphasised the importance of having a workforce that reflected the age of the community it served. Currently, 7% of the workforce is under 25 years and 14% is over 55 years. Our Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy puts in place measures to improve the age balance of our workforce with targeted activities such as 'Young Women at Work' day and the Hamlets Youth apprenticeship scheme.

Staff at all levels have access to a full range of training and development opportunities to support them in embedding equalities in their recruitment and selection, e.g. recruitment and selection training for managers, induction training for staff and one-to-one support from HR.

Working time arrangements

Flexible working practices were introduced as part the Government's Flexible Working Directive in 1999. The Council has developed working procedures including hot-desking, home working, staggered hours, term time and part time and job share working. The Council has developed a flexible working policy which was formally adopted and implemented in May 2007.

Pay, structures and equal pay

In determining pay and conditions, the Council ensures all posts are evaluated using an equality proofed job evaluation scheme which has been agreed with trade unions and the regional employers' organisation, London Councils. All staff are able to access information on pay structures and grading through the intranet and associated HR policies and procedures.

The Council also undertakes job evaluations in partnership with the Trade Unions. This means each job is evaluated by both Human Resources and a Trade Union Representative to help ensure greater consistency.

Training and development

The opportunity for staff to build on or acquire new skills is a key feature of the Council's learning and development programme. A wide range of learning opportunities are provided and employees are supported in learning through

their work. The uptake of learning and development is recorded across age range to ensure that every employee has access to continuous professional development. There is no evidence to suggest that younger or older officers are facing particular difficulties in accessing these opportunities.

Promotion and career development

Findings suggested that older staff members felt that it was difficult to find the appropriate support to help them change careers if they wanted to. The consultation also revealed that older members of staff felt it was harder for them to progress in the organisation. Findings suggested that there are some negative perceptions around the rapid progression of some younger members of staff by older staff members. However, analysis of the age range of senior managers does not indicate any disproportionate age weighting.

The consultation revealed that more promotion or retention of staff beyond the age of 65 is needed. National research indicates that a large number of people aged 50-70 who are working or looking for work say they plan to continue to work in some capacity in retirement or never to retire.¹⁸ 1% of the Council's workforce is currently over the age of 65 years.¹⁹

Working conditions and working environment

The Council has policies and procedures in place to promote equality of opportunity and to address circumstances where an employee believes that they have been disadvantaged. The Council has a Combating Harassment and Discrimination Procedure that applies to all staff. This policy and procedure is used by staff where they feel it necessary (there is no evidence that a disproportionate number of young and older staff have raised issues of discrimination).

Actions taken under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure and the Council's Sickness Management procedure are also noted. There is no evidence to suggest that young and older officers have been involved in a disproportionate number of cases.

Information is also collated on redundancy and retirement across the Council. The Council provides pre-retirement courses to employees that are nearing retirement. In recognition that financial matters are not just a priority for older workers, a Financial Services Authority course was also piloted recently to help educate all staff on personal finance issues. The Council has a procedure in place for employees to request to work beyond the age of 65. Employees that are faced with redundancy are offered support and, where possible, the option of redeployment to alternative jobs within the Council.

¹⁸ Institute of Employment Studies

¹⁹ HR Performance Information (January 2009)

Objectives

- Ensure employees and managers are aware of the Council's policy on retention of staff beyond the age of 65
- Further develop the representation of diverse ages in the Council
- Promote availability of training and promotion to all members of staff
- Explore the reasons why applicants aged 21 – 24 years are not getting shortlisted for roles.

Delivering the Age Equality Scheme Objectives 2009 -2012

Drawing on the findings outlined above, we have identified a number of key areas in which the Council along with its partners needs to take action to ensure that we promote equality for everyone living, working or visiting Tower Hamlets regardless of their age. This action plan outlines what we will undertake over the next three years.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
Building Cohesive communities	Explore barriers preventing diverse communities mixing in youth clubs and day centres	Implement the Youth Crime Action Plan, identifying disaffected young people on the edges of crime, and working with them their families, and schools to re-engage them with the community	Children and Young People's Involvement Manager, Children's Services	March 2012
	Enhance activities that bring people of different backgrounds together	Extend youth service provision across the borough, with clear targets for providers on engaging young people from all of our communities Invest in young people who are gifted and talented in sport as part of Olympics and Paralympics, so that lack of funding should not deter young people from competing at club, national or international level Offer five hours of cultural activity every week to all of our children and young people through the Find Your Talent pathfinder	Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service, Children's Services	By July 2011

A voice for young and older people.	Develop strategies for consulting with housebound older people	Work with Link Age Plus to identify consultations relevant to older people and put in place provision to engage housebound older people in these consultations, consultation forward plan to be reviewed every six months	Director of the Tower Hamlets Partnership, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010 and annually
	Ensure all correspondence materials relating to Linkage Plus are in appropriate standard to meet the requirements of older people. Further enhance the engagement of young people in local democracy	Ensure all correspondence and publicity information are in accessible languages and format. Refresh Tower Hamlets Youth Partnership with young people directly elected to Local Area Partnership (LAP) steering committees and formal representation from School Councils on o partnership forums Enhance the involvement of young people in THP decision making structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support young mayors and mayoral candidates to take up positions on THP groups by April 09; • Establish linkages between LAP youth forums and LAPs 	Commissioning Manager – Older People, Adults Health and Wellbeing Director of the Tower Hamlets Partnership, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2012 March 2010 September 2009
	Improve consultation with young people	Host a Young Advocate in Children's Services for six months, to work with us on improving the ways in which we involve children and young people in decision making	Stakeholders Engagement and Participation Manager, Children's Services	March 2010

		<p>Use the skills of parents and carers to develop services, and build upon the launch of the "Family Voice" initiative, and the use of parents and young people as peer mentors</p> <p>Embed the Every Disabled Child Matters charter to facilitate better inclusion of disabled children and young people in service design</p>	<p>Head of Equalities and Parental Engagement, Children's Services</p> <p>Disabled Children's Integrated Service Manager, Children's Services</p>	<p>March 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p>
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A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
Ending Child and Pensioner Poverty	Improve the economic well being of older people and families	Develop strategies and monitor through the planned City Strategy pilot	Access to Employment Manager, D&R	March 2010
	Enable parents and carers to improve their employability	Offer structured opportunities for parents and carers to build their confidence through volunteer programmes leading to employment	Head of Equalities and Parental Engagement, Children's Service	March 2011
		Develop strategies and monitor through the planned City Strategy pilot	Access to Employment Manager, D&R	March 2010
Improve Educational Outcomes	Support young people from workless families to improve employability	Deliver programmes that ensure young people from workless families understand and can meet the demands of the workplace	Director of Education Improvement Partnership, Children's Services	March 2011
		As part of the Economic Assessment set targets for young people	Access to Employment Manager, D&R	March 2010
	Improve the educational outcomes of young people	Share what works to raise qualification levels by 19 while narrowing the attainment gap for those from poorer homes. Ensure that all post-16 providers can demonstrate they are really helping all	Service Head Young People and Learning, Children's Services	March 2012

		<p>learners to improve and are adding at least the expected value to learner outcomes.</p> <p>Further involve our university partners in preparing more young people for higher education and support a third of young people into university at 18.</p>		
	Enhance support of young people in their transition from compulsory education into adulthood	Prioritise the needs of our looked after children and young carers to ensure they receive appropriate levels of advice and support about education, employment and training options	Service Manager Looked After Children, Children's Service	March 2010
	Enhance the support of young disabled people in their transition from Children's Services to Adults Services	Establish an improved system to better share information across agencies to ensure timely identification and the best possible outcomes for young people with disabilities	Service Manager Learning Disabilities, Children's Services	March 2010
		Facilitate person centred planning for all young people with disabilities in schools	Disabled Children's Integrated Service Manager, Children's Services	September 2009
		Establish a cross directorate transitions team to ensure a seamless transition for young people with disabilities	Disabilities Team Manager, Children's Services	September 2010
	Gather data on impact of economic downturn on young people in Borough	Undertake comprehensive gap analysis of the evidence base required to support the Economic Assessment	Access to Employment & Information and	December 2009
Supporting Young People in the Economic				

Downturn	Enhance the opportunities for young people to get quality work experience in the borough	Work through THP Diversity and Equality Network to extend work experience opportunities in local public sector	Equalities, D&R	March 2010
	Develop the workability skills of young people	Support young people to develop the skills all employers want and to get qualifications to prove it	Diversity and Equality Coordinator, Chief Executive's	March 2011
	Increase number of apprenticeships in traditional trades	Launch an additional 600 Apprenticeships across public, community and voluntary partners	Youth and Community Services, Children's Services	March 2012
	Increase range of activities available to young women	Develop activities for girls and young women as well as opportunities for young people from different ethnic backgrounds to participate in joint activities	Youth and Young People's Involvement Manager	March 2010
Provision of cultural and leisure activities		Deliver programme as part of Healthy Towns to provide women & girls swimming programme commencing April 2009 -2011	Leisure Contracts and Partnership Manager / Joint Head of Sports and Physical Activity, CLC	Commence April 2009
		Working with Muslim Women's Collective to encourage employment of Muslim women in frontline leisure	Head of Strategy & Resources, Communities, Localities and	March 2010

Enhance support for vulnerable young people to participate in leisure and cultural activities	Provide COOL cards for young carers to help them access leisure and cultural activities	Culture	Service Head, Youth and Community Services, Children's Services	March 2010	
Enable young people to access cultural activities	Develop a cultural offer for all children, young people and their families which is reflected in the curriculum, optimising the additional opportunities presented by being part of the national Find Your Talent programme	Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service, Children's Services	Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service, Children's Services	By July 2011	
Improve open space play opportunities	Improve and extend 28 playgrounds in the borough, offering more positive activities for the 0-3 year age group and their families through the Play Pathfinder	Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service, Children's Services	Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service, Children's Services	By July 2011	
Enhance range of activities available to older men	Deliver range of Young @ Heart programmes targeted at over 50s includes darts, dominoes, bowls	Leisure Contracts and Partnership Manager	Leisure Contracts and Partnership Manager	March 2010	
			Joint Head of Sports and Physical Activity, Communities, Localities and Culture		

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
Reduce Overcrowding	Increase the supply of affordable family housing	Raise issue with RSLs through the Housing Forum and review as part of Housing Strategy and Lettings Policy and Service review	Housing Strategy Team, D&R	March 2010
		Visit 200 overcrowded households across Tower Hamlets, advise them on the bidding process and housing options available to them. Monitor outcomes by E&D strands		March 2010
Supporting independent living	Improve the extent to which older people can remain in their own home throughout their lifetime	Publish LDF targets for all new dwellings built to Lifetime Homes Standards within the Annual Monitoring Report	Strategic Planning, D&R	March 2010
		Develop Re-enablement Service	Service Head Older People and Homelessness, Adults Health and Wellbeing	October 2009
		Further development of extra care shelter housing	Commissioning Manager, Older People Adults Health and Wellbeing	March 2010
	Implement transformation of Social Care through personalisation	Introduce personal budgets and Resource Allocation System (RAS)	Joint Commissioning Manager, Learning Disabilities / Head	March 2010

				of Finance, Adults Health and Wellbeing				
Implement Transformation of Social Care through personalisation.	Introduce personal budgets and Resource Allocation System (RAS) Monitor personalisation agenda and its impact on older people's choices Put in place financial systems to facilitate introduction of personal budgets, including developing new approach to budget allocation and planning	Develop approach to universal advice, information and advocacy service	Joint Commissioning Manager, Learning Disabilities & Head of Finance, Adults Health and Wellbeing	March 2010				
						Enhance provision of advocacy and advice to older people, particularly those who may be vulnerable or 'hard to reach'	Joint Commissioning Manager, Learning Disabilities & Head of Finance, Adults Health and Wellbeing	September 2009
						Improve the accessibility of public transportation, particularly in the run up to the 2012 Olympic Games	Travel Awareness Officer, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010
Enhance the provision of free accessible public toilets in the borough	Complete a feasibility study for the introduction of a Community Toilets scheme.		Service Head, Environmental Control, Communities,	March 2010				
Out and about								

			Localities and Culture	
	Ensure redevelopment creates 'safe' environments particularly at night	Prepare and publish Night Time Economy Strategy	Strategic Planning, D&R	March 2010

A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
Reducing Fear of Crime	Increase older and young people's confidence to go out after dark	Conduct feasibility study on visible enforcement options for out-of-office hours at problem areas.	Community Safety Service CCTV & Operations Team, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010
	Reduce older and young people's fear of crime	As above, including communication strategy to ensure these groups are targeted		
Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour	Tackle negative perceptions of young people, particularly their association with anti-social behaviour	Working with the Communications Team office and youth services, we actively promote positive imagery of young people in the media and campaigns including images of disabled young people	Stakeholder Engagement and Participation Manager, Children's Services	March 2011
	Monitor impact of anti-social behaviour measures on young men, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds	Generate baseline data for equalities profile of victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour		

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
Mental and Emotional Health	Monitor the implementation of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, working in partnership with PCT	Quarterly monitoring of best interest assessments	Service Head Disabilities and Health, AHWB	March 2010
	Increase awareness of mental health issues for older and young people	Ensure that mental health promotion is embedded in the work of Children's Centres and through extended schools	Children's Centres Strategic Manager / Joint Head, Extended Services, Children's Services	March 2010
		Ensure protocols support joint working across children's and adults' mental health services	Head of Support for Learning Service / Manager Children and Adult Mental Health	March 2010
	Enhance measures to tackle the social isolation of older people with particular focus on LGBT older people	Work with the Older People's Partnership Board and LGBT Community Forum to support the Older People's LGBT Group	Service Head, Older People and Homelessness, Adults Health and Wellbeing Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's	March 2010
	Improve the accessibility of	Deliver services in more accessible settings in	Children and	March

	mental health services for young people	the community such as Children's Centres, schools and GP surgeries	Adolescent Mental Health Services, Children's Services	2011
Dementia	In partnership with PCT and East London NHS Foundation Trust, develop a strategy to meet the needs of people with dementia and their carers, including better assessment, early diagnosis and longer-term support and care	Complete a Dementia Strategy in line with the new national Dementia Strategy	Service Head, Disability and Health, Adults Health and Wellbeing	December 2009
Active opportunities for older people	Improve access to leisure facilities	Deliver range of Young @ Heart programmes targeted at over 50s (Community Investment Fund Programme)	Sports Development Team, Cultural Services, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010
	Enhance older people's feelings of safety in open spaces	Identification of crime reduction and security priorities for parks and open spaces	Parks & Play, Cultural Services, Communities, Localities and Culture	October 2009
Tackling Childhood Obesity	Provide increased support for walking and cycling	Provide increased and improved walking and cycling routes and more support for walking and cycling through Healthy Schools and community initiatives	Joint Head Extended Services, Children's Services	March 2010

		Development and progression of PCT-funded Bike It project to encourage cycling to school, currently in Year 1 of 3 year programme	Travel Awareness Officer, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010
		Development of School Travel Plan process so that each and every school has a Travel Plan encouraging sustainable, healthy modes of travel	School Travel Advisor, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2011
		Cycle training programme rolled out to numerous schools each year in the Borough (approximately 1,500 pupils per year)	Project Manager Safety and Sustainability / Travel Awareness Officer, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010
Improve the choices of healthy food available	Offer healthier food choices in children's centres, schools, leisure and community centres, shops, cafes, restaurants and take-aways through incentive and award schemes	Head of Contract Services, Children's Services	September 2010	
Enhance the skills, knowledge and confidence of families to live healthily	Build health into existing and new parenting programmes to boost skills, knowledge and confidence and influence home environments	Head of Equalities and Parental Engagement /	March 2011	

	<p>Expand targeted and specialist provision to support children and families with identified weight management needs</p>	<p>Expand and build on our targeted and specialist provision to support children and families with identified weight management needs, including a new early intervention service for families where one or both parents is overweight or obese</p>	<p>Project Manager, Children's Services</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
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PROMOTING AGE EQUALITY AS AN EMPLOYER

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
<p>A Workforce to Reflect the Community</p>	<p>Ensure employees and managers are aware of the Council's policy on retention of staff beyond the age of 65</p>	<p>Include item in Managers Briefing to remind managers and staff of content of the Council's Age Discrimination policy</p>	<p>HR Manager, Operations, Resources</p>	<p>September 2009</p>
	<p>Further develop the representation of diverse ages in the Council</p>	<p>Outline proposals in Workforce to Reflect the Community report to Cabinet</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director of Organisational Development, Resources</p>	<p>April 2009</p>
	<p>Promote availability of training and promotion to all members of staff</p>	<p>Publicise opportunities through regular emails to staff on course availability and including items in Pulling Together and Managers Briefing</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director of Organisational Development, Resources</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
	<p>Explore the reasons why applicants aged 21- 24 years are not getting short listed for roles</p>	<p>Review and analyse recruitment statistics in annual Equality Schemes Employment Monitoring Report and analysis of findings and recommendations presented to CESC.</p>	<p>HR Manager, Operations, Resources</p>	<p>March 2010</p>

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**Tower Hamlets
Religion / Belief Equality Scheme
2009-12**

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Executive Summary

This is the Council's first Religion/Belief Equality Scheme and it aims to promote equality and eliminate discrimination for all Tower Hamlets residents and staff regardless of their religion or belief. We are a unique borough in terms of the pattern of religion/belief; over 80% of residents claim a religious belief while the third largest religion/belief category is people who have no religious belief. We also have the largest proportion of Muslim residents of any local authority in the country. The history of the borough as a jumping off point for new communities has contributed to the religious diversity of the area.

Although this is our first Religion/Belief Equality Scheme the Council has a strong track record of work in this area. Our work on promoting community cohesion and involving communities has been widely recognised as best practice. The borough's Interfaith Forum has been supported by the Council since its establishment in 2004 and provides an effective mechanism for involving faith communities in shaping and scrutinising services as well as strengthening the links between communities. At an operational level Council services have worked with faith communities to respond to issues of common concern in areas as varied as child protection, domestic violence and recycling.

This Equality Scheme identifies the Council's priorities for addressing inequality experienced by specific faith communities and people of non-religious belief in relation to the five Community Plan themes of: One Tower Hamlets; a Prosperous Community; a Safe & Supportive Community; a Healthy Community and; a Great Place to Live. It also identifies our priorities as an employer.

This Equality Scheme also contains a set of principles which will guide our approach to delivering our commitment to tackling inequality and discrimination based on religion/belief:

- To make Tower Hamlets a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together
- To challenge discrimination in all its forms, in relation to all people who work, live or visit the borough
- To create an inclusive workplace in which all staff feel their contribution is valued
- To ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged as a result of their religion or belief
- To address inequality which arises from an individual or group's religion or belief
- To recognise the role of the faith communities in contributing to the wellbeing of people in borough and support them to fulfil this role

Introduction

The Council's vision and the vision of the Tower Hamlets Partnership is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets.

Everyone should realise their full potential in Tower Hamlets. The 2020 Vision Community Plan outlines our aspiration of 'One Tower Hamlets'. One Tower Hamlets is about reducing the inequalities and poverty that we see around us, strengthening cohesion and making sure our communities continue to live well together. Most of all, One Tower Hamlets is about recognising that we all have a part to play in making this a reality.

One way of ensuring this vision is to focus our attention on inequalities experienced by our residents. The Council has been awarded Level 5 of the Equality Standard and is one of the best councils in the country for its equalities work. This religion/belief equality scheme, along with others for gender, disability, race, sexual orientation and age will enable us to provide services and develop policies and strategies which make sure that we provide for equality for all. We plan to combine these schemes into a single Equalities scheme in 2010 to best serve the individual needs of each of our residents. This reflects the move nationally towards a Single Equalities Bill which recognises the whole experience of every person.

We recognise that people may experience specific disadvantages due to their religion/belief. Misconceptions and prejudice about specific religions or beliefs and the people who hold them can lead to them being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that people of all faiths and none have the right to equality of opportunity and make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large. As such, this first Religion/Belief Equality Scheme will focus on ensuring that we are able to respond appropriately to their needs.

We are already doing significant work to tackle the particular inequalities faced by specific faith communities. One of the key ways in which this is evidenced is through the support given to the Interfaith Forum. The Forum embraces almost 300 organisations, meets every two months, has its own website, regular newsletter and organises a series of events in Interfaith Week. The Forum also plays an active role in other local groups and activities - on the Partnership Management Group and in the Race and Hate Crime Interagency Forum as well as providing a useful partner in monitoring ongoing community tensions. The Council also works with faith communities on a number of service issues, including: the Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE) which brings together representatives from all faiths to agree on the local curriculum for religious education; Children's Services Working with Muslim Families sub-group of the local Safeguarding Children's Board; Jewish Care provide day care services to older people in the Jewish community and; support

for a range of public events and activities throughout the year to promote understanding of all the borough's faith communities and includes annual events to mark St George's Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and Islam Awareness Week.

This Religion/Belief Equality Scheme will ensure that religion/belief equality is delivered by multiple services across the Council. To this end we aim to put in place policies and services which enable everyone to access our services regardless of their religion/belief and to improve outcomes for all. We also want to ensure that people of all faiths and none have choice and control in decisions affecting their lives.

Key priorities

Within each of the Council's Equality Schemes we have identified three priority areas of inequality which require significant and sustained action across a number of Council services. These priority areas provide the Council with some high level direction about where attention and resources need to be targeted to make real progress.

In reaction to religion/belief inequality, these priorities are set out below and are explored further in this Equality Scheme. Linked to poverty all three sit at heart of inequality in Tower Hamlets. To make a dramatic shift against the inequality of Tower Hamlets and make progress on the wide range of issues identified in each of Equality Schemes it is recommended that investment to address these four core inter-connected areas will lead that change.

- Increase economic activity among Muslim women
- Address shortage of suitable social housing which has a disproportionate effect on Muslim families
- Increase the extent to which people of different faiths say they get on well together

Religion / Belief Equality Legislation

The Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations came into force in December 2003 (at the same time as similar provisions covering sexual orientation; regulations against discrimination on grounds of age followed in 2006). These Regulations make it unlawful for employers to discriminate on the grounds of religion & belief.

The regulations in this field apply to discrimination on grounds of religion, or religious or philosophical belief (the requirement for philosophical beliefs to be similar to religious beliefs was removed by the passing of Part 2 of the Equality Act in 2006). They cover discrimination on grounds of 'perceived' as well as 'actual' religion or belief, and the religion or belief of someone with whom the person associates. It is also illegal to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief in the provision of goods, facilities and services, and the disposal and management of premises.

The Human Rights Act (1998) sets out the right of everybody to have access to public services and the right to be treated fairly and with dignity. It includes the right to being safe and protected from harm and the right to take an active part in your community and society which have particular implications for our work with young and older people. It prohibits discrimination on a wide range of grounds and case law has extended this to include age.

How we developed our Religion/Belief Equality Scheme

The development of our Scheme has been led by the Corporate Scrutiny & Equalities Team. This has been supported by officers from the Corporate Equalities Steering Group (CESG) who are the key equalities representatives from each Directorate. The development of the scheme has followed a clear project plan, the steps of which are outlined below:

Gathering Baseline Information

A comprehensive baseline exercise was undertaken using a combination of research and input from staff across the Council including analysis of demographic and statistical information, analysis of existing consultation and a review of relevant Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIAs).

Consultation Exercises

From the baseline information we were able to identify a number of areas for further examination and discussion. To test our findings and to gain further input as to which areas should be our priorities we undertook a number of consultation activities with residents, voluntary and statutory agencies and members of staff. This involved public events, online surveys, targeted consultation with specific communities. During the course of the consultation we engaged with all the major faith groups in the borough as well as people of non-religious beliefs.

Setting Priorities and Objectives

Using feedback from our consultation and baseline exercises, a number of key themes for priority and overarching activity have emerged.

Corporate Framework for Diversity and Equality

Delivery framework

Valuing diversity is one of four core values of Tower Hamlets Council. We will promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve the life for everyone living, working and visiting Tower Hamlets. We will build upon this by working with the Tower Hamlets Partnership to provide accessible and responsive services that enable everyone to take part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough. Achieving this is central to delivering the Council's vision, is linked to the Strategic Plan priorities and objectives and forms a driving force within the Community Plan and key to creating a cohesive community.

Our aims and values

As a service provider we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the planning and delivery of our services in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status
- Promote good relations between communities and address negative stereotyping of any groups
- Ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process
- Tackle harassment relating to a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status

As an employer we will:

- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for our workforce in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement)
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse nature of the borough

We will recognise our community leadership role and use this to work towards a cohesive community in which inequality is tackled and equality promoted.

Our commitment is supported by a number of legal duties that require us to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, including:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998

- 2004 Employment Regulations on Religion and Faith

However under current legislation, the requirements to address inequality and discrimination and promote equality vary between equality 'strand'. For example, while under current legislation we are required to address discrimination against employees on the basis of all six equality strands, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religion / belief, it is only in relation to race, gender and disability that this duty extends to the provision of services and the active promotion of equality. We believe however that we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and inequality exists for individuals and groups belonging to all of the six equality strands. We are therefore committed to going beyond the requirements laid down in law to address all six equality strands and to do everything that we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote better understanding and respect between all people.

To demonstrate our commitment to all six equality strands, the Council has gone beyond the legal requirement to produce Equality Schemes in relation to gender and disability and has published Schemes covering Religion/Belief, Age and Sexual Orientation equality. Each Scheme sets out what we know about the profile of our community in relation to the relevant strand and the nature of inequality experienced by people as a result of this element of their identity. The Schemes also contain a summary of the action which the Council and partners will undertake to address inequality and discrimination in relation to this equality strand.

How we will deliver our commitment

Tackling discrimination and promoting equality requires action at corporate, directorate, service, team and individual levels. At a corporate level the six Equality Schemes and the overall Diversity and Equality Action Plan identifies priority areas for work on equalities across the organisation. The Diversity and Equality Action Plan is agreed by Cabinet annually and monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee six-monthly along with a summary of progress against each of the Equality Schemes.

Below we describe the processes and procedures we have put in place to embed the delivery of our commitment to promote equality in relation to all six strands within everything that we do as a Council:

- Undertake **equality impact assessments** of both new and existing policies and services
- Ensure that all our **team plans** incorporate relevant diversity and equality objectives and targets
- Ensure all new staff participate in Council **equality induction training** processes
- Ensure that our policies are compliant with **equality legislation**

- **Involve communities, staff and stakeholders** in the design, review and scrutiny of our services and employment practices
- Increase the extent to which our **workforce reflects the local community**
- Using our **procurement** powers to make sure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy
- **Monitoring the equality profile** of people using and benefiting from our services to enable us to identify groups which are not accessing services
- **Provide information and access** to our services in accessible ways

The profile of religion/belief in Tower Hamlets

The consultation for the Religion/Belief Equality Scheme revealed a wide variety of views and opinions about the way in which the Council relates to faith communities and questions about religion/belief. These can be broadly drawn into the following three categories:

- 'Instrumentalising' of faith based organisations to deliver government agendas and a failure to engage with faith communities on areas of importance to them. This view was frequently put forward by participants concerned that current models for faith communities to engage with public bodies required them to fit within certain predefined terms and this limited their independence and advocacy role.
- That there is an over-anxiety among Council officers about proselytising and unreasonable requirements on faith based organisations to adopt secular language in order to be allowed to tender for contracts to provide services on behalf of the Council. Some participants pointed out that this approach was at odds with a parallel commitment to increase 'faith literacy' in the public sector and to recognise the important role faith communities play in responding to the welfare needs of communities.
- That the Council is too close to faith communities and that this makes it difficult for people with no religious beliefs or who wish to keep their religious beliefs private, to be open about their beliefs

The lack of consensus about the role of the Council in addressing issues of religion/belief and the fact that there was no discernable pattern in terms of which groups/individuals subscribed to which view, illustrates the unique nature of religion / belief as an equality strand. Despite this variety of views, there has emerged through consultation and research for the RBES a set of principles which should guide our approach to delivering our commitment to tackling inequality and discrimination based on religion/belief:

- To make Tower Hamlets a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together
- To challenge discrimination in all its forms, in relation to all people who work, live or visit the borough
- To create an inclusive workplace in which all staff feel their contribution is valued
- To ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged as a result of their religion or belief

- To address inequality which arises from an individual or group's religion or belief
- To recognise the role of the faith communities in contributing to the wellbeing of people in borough and support them to fulfil this role

Religion/belief in the community

The profile of religion and belief in Tower Hamlets is very distinctive. During the 2001 Census seventy eight percent of residents stated that they has a religious belief, which is significantly higher than the national average. The borough has the highest proportion of Muslim people of any local authority area in the country, at 36.4%. However, fourteen percent of people described themselves as having no religious belief, which makes them the third largest religion/belief group in the borough. The section below describes what we know about the demographic profile of individuals and groups of people who hold religious and non-religious beliefs in the borough, as well of those of no belief. It then goes onto describe some of the ways in which faith communities both past and present have contributed to and shaped the borough.

Demographic profile of religion/belief groups

The information in this section draws extensively on the findings of the 2001 Census, it is therefore important to note that while these statistics provide the most comprehensive information available on the profile of religion and belief in the borough it is likely that this profile has changed in the last eight years as the population of the borough has changed and adapted. Information on the profile of religion/belief across London is taken from the Greater London Authority's 'Key Facts for Diverse Communities: Ethnicity and faith' published in 2007.

Buddhist community, approx. 1%

The proportion of Buddhists living in Tower Hamlets is three times higher than the national average. The London Buddhist Centre in Bethnal Green is a major centre for the Buddhist community. The Centre and surrounding area is home to several residential Buddhist communities along with a number of associated businesses and organisations. The Centre is run by the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order and a large proportion of people who attend the centre are from a western European background. The Buddhist population however is spread across the borough, ranging from 0.44 percent of the population in St Dunstan's and Stepney Green to 1.6 percent in Blackwall and Cubitt Town.

Christian community, approx. 39%

There are numerous Christian communities in the borough from a variety of theological and ethnic backgrounds.

Obtaining accurate and up to date information about congregations is difficult as a number of newer Christian communities do not have dedicated accommodation

and may meet in churches belonging to other faith communities or in other informal venues. However the Interfaith Forum's database of faith organisations includes 134 Christian organisations, including a large number of Black-led churches, as well as Philippino and Vietnamese congregations. In addition we know that there are thirteen Catholic churches in the Tower Hamlets Deanery and in 2007 the total number of people attending Sunday Mass at these churches was just under five thousand. We also know twenty Anglican congregations in parishes in the borough. In addition there are Chaplaincies in Docklands, Barts & the London hospitals, the London Metropolitan University. There is an Anglican community based at the Royal Foundation of St Katherine.

In terms of age the community is varied, with a larger proportion of older people than other faith communities. Christian communities are varied in terms of ethnicity with significant numbers of Roman Catholics from eastern Europe and Pentecostal Christians from African countries.

Geographically the proportion of Christian people varies significantly across the borough, from eighteen percent in Spitalfields and Banglatown to sixty percent in Bow East.

Hindu community, approx. 0.8%

The Hindu community in the borough is proportionally one of the smallest in London. Within the borough Hindu people are geographically dispersed. The majority of Hindus in the borough come from Bangladesh - a fact which illustrates the importance of not relying on ethnicity as a proxy for religion/belief. A smaller number of Hindus come from Pakistan, India and elsewhere. The number of Hindus in the borough appears to be increasing as a result of increased migration.

Data on the borough's Hindu population is limited, however London-wide data suggests that Hindu people tend to be younger than the capital average, with thirty six percent of the population falling into the 25-44 age group.

Jewish community, approx. 0.93%

There has been Jewish population in London since the eleventh century, however it was from 1881 that the rate of migration of Jewish people to the East End increased significantly. The capital's first Ashkenazi synagogue was built in Aldgate in 1722. By 1901 the Jewish population of Tower Hamlets was over 50,000 and there were estimated to be 150 synagogues in the East End. Significant migration to north and east London has taken place over the last years. The remaining community is older than the borough average.

Muslim community, approx. 36.4%

Tower Hamlets has the largest proportion of Muslim people of any local authority area in the country. The 2001 Census shows that the vast majority of the Muslim population is Bangladeshi, however there are also significant numbers of Somali,

Algerian and Moroccan Muslims living in the borough as well as smaller numbers from Arab countries, the Indian subcontinent and eastern Europe¹.

In Tower Hamlets, 61% of the under 15 population are Muslim whereas 21% are Christian. In contrast, amongst the 50+ population 61% identify as Christian and 19% as Muslim.

The youthful profile of the Muslim community and the significant migration into the borough of Muslim people from other parts of Britain and the world make the Muslim community the fastest growing faith community in the borough².

Sikh community, approx. 0.35%

The proportion of Sikhs living in Tower Hamlets is significantly smaller than the national proportion for England (0.67 percent). The majority of the population in the borough are from an Indian background. There are large Sikh communities in neighbouring boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Walham Forest and some people from these areas travel into the borough to worship at the two Gurdwaras in the east of the borough.

Data on the borough's Sikh population is limited, however London-wide data suggests that Sikhs living in the capital are slightly younger than the London average with half the proportion of pensioners, compared to other groups.

People with non-religious beliefs

The 2001 Census question on religion/belief provided limited data on non-religious belief. People who did not wish to tick one of the religions included on the census form had to tick either "no religion" or not complete the section. The figure given for "No religion" therefore includes people who ticked 'None' on the religion question plus those who wrote in Jedi Knight, Agnostic, Atheist and Heathen and those who ticked 'Other' but did not write in any religion. In Tower Hamlets this was 18%, making it the third largest group, after Christianity and Islam.

There is limited information on people with non-religious belief in the borough. London-wide figures suggest that people with non religious belief are more likely to live in cohabiting couple households than other Londoners, are slightly more likely to live in one person households and significantly less likely to live in married couple households. The age profile of people with no religious belief is distinctive in that significantly more people are between 25-44 than the London average, whereas there are significantly less older people than in other religion/belief groups.

History of religion/belief in Tower Hamlets

Historically the nature of new communities settling in the East End has partly

¹ 'New Communities in Tower Hamlets: Characteristics, trends and challenges', Praxis (2007)

² Ibid.

been defined by their religion – French Huguenots (Calvinist Protestants), Irish Catholics, East European Jews, Bangladeshi Muslims are the most well known. For each group faith has been a driver to participation in public life, whether through charity work, community engagement or politics. There is a strong tradition of faith-based charities locally which often pick up those people who may fall through the net of statutory provision. Faith organisations are themselves either the owners or the guardians of a range of community assets including buildings, land and their congregations/communities.

Buildings and land

Many of the borough's historic faith communities have erected buildings both as places of worship and to serve social needs of communities past and present. These historic buildings are often linked to green space. There are also non-purpose built sites which have been used and adapted by faith communities to meet changing community needs. In 2007 English Heritage funded a research programme to map all places of worship in the borough and produced a guide to sites, both those in use and those now lying empty. This map can be found at:

<http://www.religionandplace.org.uk/>

While many of these buildings are valuable assets, they are also a costly inheritance and meeting the costs of maintaining, adapting and repairing these often historic sites, many of which are listed, is a significant financial challenge for a number of faith communities. Smaller and newer faith communities have different problems finding accommodation to meet their needs. As a joint Community Development Foundation/Home Office needs analysis report found in 2006, "the need to find suitable accommodation for their worship and internal needs saps the energy for becoming involved in wider issues"³.

Charitable work and giving

There is a strong tradition of faith-based charities locally which often pick up those people who may fall through the net of statutory provision, both from their own faith communities and the wider population. Such charities are a proportion of our local 'third sector'. The foundation of the Salvation Army in Whitechapel in the late nineteenth century is perhaps just one of the more famous examples of what this might mean. A study by Praxis, a local voluntary organisation, published in 2007 on the needs of new communities in the borough noted the important role faith communities can play in providing new residents with links to wider communities, services and social support⁴.

Social and support services provided by faith communities in the borough are wide ranging and vary in terms of scale and formality. Examples of services include supplementary religious and non-religious education, drug treatment

³ 'Needs Analysis of Capacity Building in Faith Communities in Tower Hamlets', CDF/Home Office Research (2006)

⁴ 'New Communities in Tower Hamlets: Characteristics, trends and challenges', Praxis (2007)

services, English language classes to welfare advice and family conflict services.

Reasonable Adjustments

This section provides guidance about factors to take into account when delivering a service, running an activity or event, providing funding or scheduling meetings to ensure that you promote equality and do not adversely affect any individual or group as a result of their religion or belief. It is important to note that these are intended to highlight some of the most common barriers to promotion of religion/belief equality, it is not a comprehensive guide to providing an equitable service and it is important that we take a proactive approach to identifying individual needs rather than presuming what we know the best solution. The key principle here is to ensure that it is clear that efforts will be made to accommodate needs and preferences based on religion or belief and encourage staff, service users or residents to discuss their needs where they feel there may be a barrier to their access or involvement in an activity. A participant in one of the RBES consultation events said:

“I would like the Council to understand the importance of faith but not to presume they know all about it in terms of how I would like services provided, make no assumptions please!”

Timing of activities and events

- The timing of activities can affect who is able to attend. For many faith communities some days and times of year are considered holy and this may affect their ability to take part in activities run during that time. For example Friday lunchtimes are a key time for Muslims many of whom attend *Jumma* prayers at that time. Members of Jewish communities mark *Shabbat* from sundown on Friday to dusk on Saturday and many refrain from work during this time. For Christians Sunday is the holy day and Eucharist services are held during the day.
- A calendar of major religious festivals and events is produced each year by the Interfaith Forum and the Council’s Diversity and Equality Team, this is available at:

<http://www.faithintowerhamlets.com/default/1150.calendar/index.htm>

Guidance:

- When planning meetings, the following general principles should be followed:
 - Where the membership of the group is known, future meeting dates should be made available to all members of the group and members invited to indicate if they are unable to attend.
 - Where attendees of meetings are not known in advance, for example public meetings, dates of major religious festivals should be avoided. These dates can be found on the

Interfaith Calendar.

Food and catering

- Many people have religious and non-religious beliefs about which foods they are and are not able to eat.
- When providing food, it is important that anyone taking part in the activity is invited to let you know if they have any specific dietary requirements as early on in the planning of the activity as possible.
- If you are unable to contact attendees in advance of the meeting then steps can be taken to maximise the opportunities for attendees to eat, for example vegetarian food is more widely acceptable than meat. Where meat is provided it is important to recognise that Sikhs and some other meat eaters will not eat halal meat. Hindus do not eat beef.

Further information about the food requirements of different faith communities can be found in the ACAS publication 'Religion or Belief in the Workplace':

<http://www.efbelief.org.uk/legal/ACAS%20Guide%20-%20Religion%20and%20Belief.pdf>

The story so far

The Council has worked closely with faith communities and organisations for a number of years on a wide variety of issues of common concern from targeted projects to address inequality for specific communities to the promotion of community cohesion and service provision. Faith communities are represented at all levels of decision making within the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

A number of projects and initiatives involving faith communities in the borough have been recognised as innovative by external bodies. For example the School Attendance Project run as a partnership between Children's Services and the London Muslim Centre was highlighted as a key area of work in the Council's Beacon award for Getting Closer to Communities in 2004. The Council supported Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum has featured in a number of best practice publications by the IDeA and Interfaith Network of the UK. In 2008 the 'Faith in the City' project commissioned as part of the Council's Preventing Violent Extremism programme was awarded the Government Office for London award for innovation.

Some examples of existing work with faith communities to tackle inequality and promote cohesion include:

- The commissioning of Jewish Care to provide targeted day care services to older Jewish residents
- The development of a 'Working with Muslim Families' sub-group of the Local Safeguarding Children Board to develop the capacity of local statutory and faith organisations to ensure high standards of child protection
- The establishment of the Community Cohesion Contingency Planning and Tension Monitoring Group to bring together representatives of faith and community groups to identify and respond proactively to tension between communities
- A training programme for Muslim women to qualify as football coaches, delivered by the Muslim Women's Collective

Understanding equality in the context of religion/belief in Tower Hamlets

The section below describes what we know about how people of religious and non-religious belief and those of no belief experience inequality and disadvantage in Tower Hamlets. This section is organised according to the themes of the Tower Hamlets 2008-20 Community Plan and draws on the ten domains of inequality set out in the Equality Mapping Framework.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS

Capacity to enjoy individual, family and social life

Throughout the consultation on the RBES people told us how much they valued the opportunity to celebrate religious festivals and to have these festivals recognised. Both within the Council and in the wider community, religious festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Staff told us that they were keen for recognition of these festivals to be formalised to ensure that the major festivals of all faith communities in the borough receive coverage and provide an opportunity for people of all faiths and none to learn about one another.

Objectives

- Recognise major religious festivals of all the borough's faith communities and ensure publicity enhances interfaith understanding

Capacity to be and express yourself, and have self-respect

In 2008 over seventy percent of people in Tower Hamlets felt that the borough is a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together⁵. However there were factors which some participants in the RBES consultation felt contributed to fear and could lead to people being treated without dignity or respect as a result of their religion or belief. Many participants highlighted the detrimental impact of negative press coverage of interfaith relations and incidents of tension between communities.

For newer faith communities access to facilities for worship and social activities was highlighted as a major issue of concern. For some faith communities, including Hindus, a lack of place of worship means that they have to travel out of the borough to worship. For others a lack of resources mean that worship and community activities take place in inadequate buildings. This can lead to health and safety concerns and enforcement action being taken where building regulations are being breached.

Objectives:

- Tackle negative portrayal of faith communities and interfaith relations in

⁵ Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey, 2008

- the media to reduce the potential for such coverage to increase tension between communities
- Ensure that faith communities are able to access advice and support about maintaining places of worship as safe and sustainable buildings
 - Ensure that faith communities are able to access advice and support about using and adapting buildings for use as places of worship

Capacity to participate in decision-making and have a voice and influence

The RBES consultation revealed a number of different perspectives on the relationship between faith communities and local public authorities. A number of participants felt that the role of faith communities in decision making should be expanded and support provided to faith communities to play this advocacy and representation role on behalf of members. Others however felt it was important that faith communities maintained their independence from public authorities and that too close a relationship with the Council and other public bodies could compromise their ability to play an active role in civil society.

A number of participants suggested that the role of faith communities within local decision making structures should be clarified to ensure that representatives are encouraged to reflect the interests not only of their own faith community but of the wider faith communities of the borough. For example the faith community representatives on the Tower Hamlets Partnership should be accountable not only to their own faith communities also to the wider Interfaith Forum, which is open to people of all faiths or none interested in interfaith activity and dialogue.

Objectives:

- Enable faith communities to work together to have a voice within local decision making structures, including the Tower Hamlets Partnership

A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Capacity to have the skills to participate in society

Throughout the consultation for the RBES, participants identified opportunities for learning about the range of cultures and beliefs of people in the borough as a key priority. Schools and workplaces were identified as spaces where people of different faiths and backgrounds met and learnt about one another. Interfaith activities, including meetings of the borough's Interfaith Forum and events such as the annual interfaith service to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, were also described in positive terms.

The consultation also suggested that opportunities for interfaith dialogue and contact need to be extended to ensure that people are able to take part in these activities. Particular points raised included:

- The need to develop opportunities for contact between faith communities and people with non-religious beliefs or no belief.

- The need to provide spaces for people who don't speak English to take part in interfaith activities
- The need include an interfaith dimension in work with those perpetrating faith hate crime and violent extremism.

Consultation with staff within the Council suggested that activities designed to increase understanding of faith communities and religious belief should not focus on one religion or faith, but give information about the variety of faith communities in the borough. This would avoid any implication that one faith community is being favoured over another and support the Council's aim to increase interfaith understanding and relationships between people.

Objectives:

- Increase opportunities for involvement of people with no or non-religious belief in faith and interfaith activities
- Extend interfaith dimension of work with perpetrators of faith hate and violent extremism
- Support the development of interfaith activities which engage people who don't speak English
- Ensure that faith awareness activities funded by the Council are presented within an interfaith context to ensure that they contribute to better understanding and relations between people of different backgrounds in the borough

Capacity to take part in productive and valued activities

Worklessness

In Tower Hamlets we have the second highest level of economically inactive working age women in the country, at forty nine percent. The Greater London Authority has published research showing that across the capital Muslim people are almost twice as likely to be economically inactive compared to the average. Of the economically inactive group, Muslim people are more likely to be looking after a family or be studying than other groups⁶.

There is significant evidence to indicate that Muslim women are particularly likely to be economically inactive and experience multiple barriers to accessing paid employment. In 2006 the Equal Opportunities Commission published research into the experiences of Muslim women in the workplace, which drew on interviews with women in Tower Hamlets⁷. The report concluded that Muslim women experience numerous barriers in entering and progressing in the labour market and this amounts to an area of significant inequality. The Tower Hamlets Employment Strategy sets out a framework to tackle some of these complex issues of employment and worklessness within the borough.

⁶ 'Key Facts for Diverse Communities: Ethnicity and Faith', Greater London Authority, (2007)

⁷ 'Moving on Up: Workplace Cultures Report', Equal Opportunities Commission, (2007)

Volunteering and charitable work

Levels of volunteering and charity work in Tower Hamlets are high. Faith-based community groups and voluntary organisations make up a significant proportion of these groups. In addition a significant proportion of people with religious belief in the borough give time and money to support the management of places of worship and faith related activities. For example, local residents are members of mosque management committees, stand as governors at faith schools in the borough and run voluntary activities such as Sunday schools. A report on mosques in the borough, published in 2008, identified worshipper donations as the major source of income for all mosques in the borough⁸.

Objectives:

- Reduce levels of economic inactivity among Muslim women in the borough through reducing barriers to employment

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Capacity to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security

Housing

In the borough the demand for social housing suitable for families far exceeds the available supply. The impact of this on communities is significant, with large numbers of families living in inadequate and poor quality housing. London-wide research by the Greater London Authority indicates that, due to the above average family size, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh families are more likely to live in overcrowded housing. Overcrowding can have adverse effects on health, educational achievement and indirectly lead to increased fear and experience of crime and anti-social behaviour. Local research undertaken with the cooperation of the borough's Council of Mosques in 2008 identified a shortage of suitable housing as the primary issue of concern to local Imams and mosque management committee members⁹.

Objectives:

- Address shortage of suitable social housing which has a disproportionate effect on Muslim families

A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

⁸ 'A window of opportunity: Developing a better understanding of the Muslim community in Tower Hamlets', Agroni Research (2008)

⁹ Ibid.

Physical security

Crimes which are reported to the Police "where anyone, including the victim, believes the victim has been targeted because of their actual or perceived religion or belief" are recorded as faith hate crimes. In addition, incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to the Council which do not constitute criminal offences but cause alarm, distress or harassment, or where anyone believes the victim has been targeted because of their actual or perceived religion or belief, are recorded as faith hate incidents.

Local research has shown that victims of faith hate crime and incidents are more likely to be repeat victims than other victims of crime¹⁰. Furthermore, they often experience feelings of not being able to escape the reason they are victimised, and that people may question the seriousness of the offence or incident.

There were five faith hate crimes in Tower Hamlets reported to the Police in 2007; in 2008 this increased to fourteen and increases were identified around religious festivals and incidents of international tension. However there is evidence of significant under reporting of faith hate crime in the borough and actual figures are likely to be much higher. There is a complex relationship between race and faith hate, with evidence suggesting that offenders may be driven by religious intolerance but display this intolerance in racist language, as opposed to identifying a specific faith. In general people seem to be more comfortable reporting race as opposed to faith hate crime.

Qualitative research carried out by the Council's Community Safety service in 2007 suggested that significant numbers of faith hate incidents go unreported. For example, at focus groups female Muslim participants described almost daily faith-related abuse and intimidation and young women reported repeated experiences of faith-related intolerance including having hijabs pulled off, verbal abuse and damage to personal property¹¹.

A review of reported faith hate crimes suggests that individuals, buildings and events are the most frequent targets and crimes include criminal damage, assault and actual bodily harm.

There are several factors which affect the vulnerability of people of faith and faith communities to hate crime.

Location

Many places of worship are identifiable as such and are therefore at risk of faith hate attacks. In the past this has included graffiti and desecration of religious symbols or artefacts. Furthermore many of these buildings are historic and making changes to improve security is both costly and may threaten the

¹⁰ 'Faith Hate Crime Workshop Report', Tower Hamlets Community Safety Service (2007)

¹¹ Ibid.

character of the original building. Many of the borough's Anglican churches also have churchyards which are publicly accessible open spaces in which incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism have been reported both to the Police, Council and Interfaith Forum.

Visibility

Religious dress also appears to increase vulnerability to hate crime. A 2007 report on hate crime in the borough highlighted experiences of harassment and intimidation of Muslim women who wore the hijab or niqaab; Christian clergy wearing clerical dress as well as Rabbis walking in and out of synagogues and people collecting for religious charities¹².

Objectives:

- Improve the security of places of worship to reduce vandalism and risk of faith hate incidents in and around places of worship
- Improve security arrangements for religious festivals and events to reduce incidents of faith hate
- Undertake targeted work to increase reporting of faith hate

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The capacity to be healthy

Access to sports facilities and activities was a key issue identified by faith communities through the consultation for the RBES. There were two key concerns raised:

- 1 **Timing of sports and leisure activities** has an impact on faith communities with some activities only being available during holy days or times, for example Sunday mornings for Christian communities, Friday lunchtimes for Muslim residents and on Saturdays for Jewish people.
- 2 **Provision of gender specific activities and facilities** enables Muslim women who do not want to take part in mixed-gender sporting activities to get involved in sports activities. However while there are facilities providing some gender specific activities in the borough, these are limited due to a lack of trained female sports staff to supervise these activities.

Support services

Faith communities play a significant role in providing support services for individuals and communities to promote wellbeing and provide support to those experiencing hardship and crisis. During the consultation for the RBES we came across numerous examples of faith communities providing support to vulnerable people, including those with mental health conditions, older people, drug users and the homeless. This support is provided in a variety of ways, from informal voluntary activities such as befriending to services provided by faith based

¹² 'Faith Hate Crime Workshop Report', Tower Hamlets Community Safety Service (2007)

organisations on behalf of and funded by public authorities.

There was also significant variation in who activities were intended to benefit, with some groups offering support principally to members of their own faith community, whilst others set out to meet needs of local people of all faiths and none. The diversity of the population in Tower Hamlets and the history of changing communities has led many faith communities to reach beyond their immediate memberships and respond creatively to the needs of the communities around them.

Responses to the RBES consultation revealed a wide variety of opinions and perceptions about the attitudes of the Council and other public bodies to working with and funding faith based organisations. This wide spectrum of views about the way in which the Council should engage with faith communities and people of faith is matched by a variety of opinions about the adequacy of Council resourcing of faith communities and the relationship between the public, private and social roles of faith communities and organisations.

Objectives:

- Increase availability of women-only activities at local sport and leisure centres
- Ensure that services providing sports, leisure and recreational activities address the potential for people of religious beliefs to have restricted access to activities held at specific times
- Review procurement framework to ensure that funding based organisations are provided with clear information about the parameters and requirements of funding streams and are supported to comply with the Council's Valuing Diversity policy

Promoting religion / belief equality as an employer

Internal consultation with Council staff revealed a variety of opinions about the way in which religion/belief should be regarded in the workplace. There was a strong feeling that the workplace played an important role in bringing people of different backgrounds together to build positive relationships and many people stated their willingness to help colleagues to understand their religion or belief. However participants also identified some factors which they felt had a detrimental affect on their ability to be open about their own religion or belief in the workplace which included: world events which lead to a negative portrayal of certain faith communities in the media; the use of language which is offensive to some faith communities in the workplace and; a feeling that some faith groups got more publicity and resources than others.

There was significant support for more interfaith events in the Council as these provided opportunities for staff to learn about the variety of religions/beliefs in the borough in a well managed and safe environment.

The information below describes the representation of people of specific religion/beliefs employed by the Council in 2007. It should be noted that this data has only been collected since 2006 and there are significant gaps in the information. We have no data on the religion/belief of twenty six percent of staff and a further ten percent declined to provide the information when asked. Expanding our understanding of the profile of religion/belief among staff is a key commitment in this Scheme.

Religion	Number and (%) of staff in each pay band					Total number of staff
	Less £20,000	£20-39,000	£40-59,000	£60-79,000	£80,000+	
Buddhist	8	19	5	0	0	32
Christian	457 (28)	1083 (34)	171 (34)	12 (29)	10 (30)	1733
Hindu	13	45	5	1	0	64
Jewish	5	19	3	0	1	28
Muslim	211 (13)	487 (15)	39 (8)	2 (5)	1 (3)	740
Sikh	5	26	2	0	0	33
None	87 (5)	327 (10)	125 (25)	17 (41)	12 (36)	568
Other	59	160	22	0	0	241
Decline to state	72 (4)	376 (12)	62 (13)	4 (9)	3 (9)	517
No data	711 (44)	613 (19)	59 (12)	5 (12)	6 (20)	1394
Total	1628	3155	493	41	33	5350

In terms of overall representation, the proportion of Christians and Muslims in the workforce is similar to the proportion in the local working age population. The proportion of people of no belief however is lower at ten percent than the

comparable borough figure of eighteen percent. The figures relating to other faith groups are too small to draw conclusive comparisons. If we analyse representation at various pay grades however, the picture is different. The proportion of Christian staff remains fairly consistent at all grades at between 28-34%. Muslim staff, by contrast are more likely to have jobs falling in the less than £20,000 and £20-29,000 pay bands, with proportionately fewer Muslim staff having jobs in the top three pay bands, at 8%, 5% and 3% respectively. The reverse appears to be true of people of no belief who make up just five percent of staff in the lowest pay band, increasing to 10%, 25%, 41% and 36% of staff in the higher pay bands.

Objectives:

- Ensure awareness amongst staff of facilities for reflection and prayer are accessible to all staff of religious and non-religious belief
- Strengthen interfaith understanding between staff and involve staff of all religions and none in relevant decision making and policy development
- Develop a dress code policy for Council staff which incorporates clear guidance to ensure that decisions about dress do not lead to direct or indirect discrimination of individuals based on religion or belief
- Address evidence of inequality or disadvantage experienced by staff as a result of their religion/belief
- Develop the ability of staff working with vulnerable people to understand and assess religion/belief related needs and preferences

Delivering the Religion/Belief Equality Scheme objectives, 2009-12

Priority	Objective	Action	By whom	By when
ONE TOWER HAMLETS				
To participate in decision making and have a voice and influence	Enable faith communities to work together to have a voice within local decision making	Develop the role of the Interfaith Forum as a key network for engaging with faith communities at all level of the THP with model agreed by April 09 and implemented by March 2010	Participation and Engagement Team, Communities, Localities and Culture	April 2009
		Ensure that processes for consulting and engaging young people actively engage people of different faith and that this is monitored.	Youth Services, Children's Services	December 2010
To be and express yourself and have self-respect	Ensure faith communities are able to access advice and support about using and adapting buildings for use as places of worship	Production of guidance for faith communities on Development and Building Control regulations and advice as part of overall review of planning guidance notes	Conservation and Design Team, D&R	September 2009
		Work with English Heritage to develop a Support Officer project to assist historic places of worship to maintain their buildings in a safe and accessible condition	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's Conservation and Design Team, D&R	March 2010
		Produce guidance on use of Council managed and owned community facilities by	Asset management	December 2009

		faith-related groups to encourage increased sharing of space by faith and community groups	Team, D&R	
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A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

To engage in productive and valued activities	Reduce levels of economic inactivity among Muslim women in the borough through reducing barriers to employment	Consider the Evidence base. Research the barriers that women face gaining access to employment to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons and develop strategies for addressing need	Access to Employment and Diversity and Equality Team, D&R	March 2010
	Recognise major religious festivals of the boroughs faith communities and ensure publicity enhances interfaith understanding	Produce a corporate calendar of major religious festivals and ensure that these are recognised both in the Council's internal communication channels and in East End Life	Diversity and Equality Team Communications Team, Chief Executive's	September 2009
	Tackle negative portrayal of faith communities and interfaith relations in the media to reduce the potential for such coverage to increase community tension	Include Communications on Community Cohesion Contingency Planning and Tension Monitoring Group meeting agendas and ensure actions are included to respond to all negative coverage	Diversity and Equality Team Communications Team, Chief Executive's	April 2009

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

To enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security	Address the shortage of social housing suitable for families	Raise issue with RSLs through the Housing Forum and review as part of Housing Strategy and Lettings Policy and Service review	Housing Strategy Team, D&R	March 2010
		Visit 200 overcrowded households across LB Tower Hamlets, advise them on the bidding		March 2010

		process and housing options available to them. Monitor outcomes by E&D strands		March 2010
To have skills to participate in society	Lack of opportunities for people with non-religious beliefs to take part in interfaith and valuing diversity activities	Develop programme for engagement of people of non-religious beliefs in Interfaith Forum activities	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's	March 2010
	Extend interfaith dimension of work with perpetrators of faith hate and violent extremism	<p>Incorporate interfaith activities within the projects funded through the Preventing Violent Extremism programme</p> <p>Develop mechanisms for involving faith leaders in Restorative Justice activities</p>	<p>Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's</p> <p>Community Safety Service, Communities, Localities and Culture</p> <p>Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's</p>	<p>June 2009</p> <p>December 2010</p>
	Support development of interfaith activities which engage people who don't speak English	Develop programme for engagement of people of who do not speak English in Interfaith Forum activities	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's	March 2010
	Ensure that faith awareness activities funded by the Council are presented within an interfaith context to ensure that they contribute to better understanding and	<p>Interfaith Week events to recognise the variety of faiths within the borough and include specific information about the variety of religions/beliefs in the borough</p> <p>Produce guidance for Religion/Belief awareness events to ensure that they support</p>	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's	November 2009
			Diversity and Equality Team,	November 2009

	relations between people of different backgrounds	the Council's overarching commitment to Valuing Diversity and creating an inclusive workplace	Chief Executive's	
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A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

To live in physical security	Improve the security of places of worship to reduce vandalism and the risk of faith hate incidents of faith hate	Forward plan of religious festival events be developed and monitored by Community Cohesion Contingency Planning and Tension Monitoring Group and organising groups offered assistance to undertake effective risk assessments and put in place proportionate measures	Diversity & Equality Team, Chief Executive's and Tower Hamlets Police Events Office	September 2009
	Improve the security of places of worship to reduce vandalism and risk of faith hate incidents	Churchyard Security Working Group to oversee security improvements to all churchyards	Diversity and Equality Team Community Safety Service, Communities, Localities and Culture	April 2009
	Ensure victims of reported faith hate are supported and increase awareness of reporting mechanisms	To maintain and develop the Third Party Reporting Project to increase reporting of hate incidents and foster effective joint working amongst partner agencies involved where 100% of Third Party Reports monitored and actioned (baseline of 18). Implement recommendations from Hate	Crime Policy & Partnership Team, Community Safety Service, Communities, Localities and Culture	March 2010 and annual update

		<p>Crime Victim's Needs Research Report for increased satisfaction with services by victims of hate crime measured through satisfaction questionnaires.</p> <p>Awareness campaign promoting clear messages that Tower Hamlets is No Place for Hate including Homophobic Hate – 100% increase in sign up to NPFH Pledge (baseline of 50), 24 outreach activities (including faith communities and events) and Evaluation Report.</p> <p>To work with partners to ensure 100% of identified perpetrators of faith hate incidents reported to the Council are actioned.</p> <p>Hate Incidents Panel - Coordination of multi-agency panel which ensures a coordinated response to all faith hate incidents reported to Council.</p> <p>To work with partners in ensuring faith hate incidents are recorded effectively.</p> <p>Act on the consultation that has taken place with local faith communities to inform the multi agency response and support strategies</p>	<p>Service Manager, Child Protection and Reviewing, Children's Services</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
	<p>Work with faith communities to ensure that young people are protected from the risk of sexual exploitation</p>			

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY			
To be healthy	Increase availability of women-only activities at local sport and leisure centres	Programme as part of Healthy Towns to provide women & girls swimming programme commencing April 2009 -2011	Sports Development Team, Cultural Services, Communities, Localities and Culture March 2010
	Ensure that services providing sports, leisure and recreational activities address the potential for people of religious beliefs to have restricted access to activities held at specific times	Production of Guidance on Reasonable Adjustments in relation to Religion and Belief to include information on considerations relating to timing of activities Developing a guide for youth workers on how to enable young people to engage with different faiths and cultures	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's April 2009
	Support faith based organisations to work within a partnership framework to provide services that meet the needs of local people and support the Council's Valuing Diversity policy	Review procurement framework to ensure that funding based organisations are provided with clear information about the parameters and requirements of funding streams and are supported to comply with the Council's Valuing Diversity policy	Youth Service, Children's Services March 2010
			Corporate Procurement Team, Resources March 2010

AS AN EMPLOYER			
Workforce to Reflect the Community	Ensure awareness amongst staff of facilities for reflection and prayer are accessible to all staff of religious and non-religious belief	Remind managers and staff of the availability of prayer rooms and there location in Council buildings.	Corporate HR, Resources
	Strengthen interfaith understanding between staff and involve staff of all religions and none in relevant decision making and policy development	Establish an interfaith staff forum to act as a reference group for consultation on prayer/reflection space and interfaith events	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's
	Address evidence of inequality or disadvantage experienced by staff as a result of their religion/belief	Monitor key human resources performance indicators and workforce profile in terms of the religion/belief profile of people involved on an annual basis Promote to all staff a firm commitment to providing support when they experience faith related prejudice or difficulties with clients, customers or services users Develop a dress code policy for Council staff which incorporates clear guidance to ensure that decisions about dress do not lead to direct or indirect discrimination of individuals based on religion or belief	Corporate HR, Resources
Develop the ability of staff working with vulnerable people to understand and assess religion/belief related	RBES Reasonable Adjustments on the grounds of religion/belief guidance	Diversity and Equality Team, Chief Executive's	September 2009
			March 2010
			From April 2009
			March 2010
			March 2010

		needs and preferences	
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Tower Hamlets
Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme
2009-2012

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Introduction

The Council's vision and the vision of the Tower Hamlets Partnership is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. We want a thriving community in which people feel at ease with one another, benefiting from higher levels of achievement and increasing employment opportunities, where people experience a higher standard of living and good health and enjoy a safe and accessible environment together with a wide range of cultural, leisure and learning opportunities. Our inclusive vision is of a community that draws strengths from its differences. We want to eliminate any barriers that prevent people accessing the opportunities and life chances on offer. We want to engage with all our communities to celebrate their rich diversity and also to work through the tension that this diversity can sometimes bring.

This Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme outlines the Council's commitment to make sure that equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people is at the centre of its work when developing a policy or strategy, providing a service, or employing people. We recognise that society has negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about LGB people, and that these attitudes and beliefs can lead to LGB being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that LGB people have the right to equality and opportunity and make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large. This scheme shows how the Council with its partners will ensure that it eliminates LGB discrimination and harassment and promotes equality for all regardless of their sexual orientation.

The Council recognises that LGB people choose a range of terms to describe themselves and their community. The Council has chosen to call this document the Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme, as it is the most widely accepted umbrella term used in lesbian, gay and bisexual politics.

Transgendered people may face similar negative social attitudes and injustices to LGB people, and the Council recognises and supports their rights too. However, it is important to underline that sexuality and gender identity are different and that each faces its own set of legal and social issues. Whilst this document serves transgendered people who may identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, the Gender Equality Scheme provides more specific information on how the Council will support transgendered people.

Within each of the Council's Equality Schemes we have identified three priority areas of inequality which require significant and sustained action across a number of Council services. These priority areas provide the Council with some high level direction about where attention and resources need to be targeted to make real progress.

In relation to sexual orientation inequality, these priorities are set out below and are explored further in this Equality Scheme. Linked to poverty all three sit at heart of inequality in Tower Hamlets. To make a dramatic shift against the

inequality of Tower Hamlets and make progress on the wide range of issues identified in each of Equality Schemes it is recommended that investment to address these core inter-connected areas will lead that change.

- Work with partners to tackle LGB discrimination in the workplace
- Challenge homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools. Almost two thirds of young LGB pupils have experienced direct bullying in schools.
- Reduce homophobic hate crime in the borough and promote understanding, awareness and respect for LGB people.

In addition, research undertaken for this scheme has highlighted the limited information that we hold regarding LGB people. Collecting more information will enable us to improve our knowledge of the specific needs of LGB people and provide them with appropriate services.

Sexual Orientation Equality Legislation

LGB people have benefited from many recent changes in the law. These changes have provided the local LGB population with a greater degree of legal protection and have helped to promote their well-being and sense of equality. A significant number of these changes have had a direct impact on the Council and its roles as service provider, community leader and employer. Some of the key requirements are as follows:

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

These cover direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation. Employees who believe that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation are able to take their cases to employment tribunals. This applies to all aspects of employment and training, including recruitment, promotion, terms and conditions and dismissals.

The Civil Partnership Act 2004

The growing recognition of same-sex couples in law has placed new requirements on the Council. The 2004 Act affects many different areas, including pension rights, Housing and Council Tax Benefits, social services provision, customer service information and birth and death registration.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The developments above have been consolidated by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007, which prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, in education and in the exercise of public functions, which covers almost any activity in which the Council is engaged. The Regulations make it unlawful to:

- Refuse to provide goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation
- Provide goods, facilities and services of a different *quality* on grounds of sexual orientation
- Provide goods, facilities and services in a different *manner* on grounds of sexual orientation
- Provide goods, facilities and services on different *terms* on grounds of sexual orientation

The Regulations also apply to pupil admissions and access to education services.

The Single Equality Bill is expected to replace the separate equality duties on public authorities covering race, disability and gender with a single equality duty, which will also extend to gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. This will place a legal obligation on local authorities to promote sexual orientation.

How we developed the Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme

To develop the Schemes a comprehensive baseline exercise was undertaken using a combination of research and input from staff across the Council. Key activities that were undertaken included: analysis of statistical information, analysis of local and national research; consultation with services and teams, and a review of existing Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIAs).

Due to significant gaps in local information about LGB people two specific pieces of research were commissioned into the needs of LGBT people in the borough, and the specific needs of older LGBT people to inform this Scheme. This research was overseen by a subgroup of the Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum. Additionally wider consultation was undertaken with residents through street surveys, an Internet survey and consultation with staff about their views and experiences of the Council as an LGB employer. The results of an anonymous Stonewall questionnaire to all staff also informed this Scheme.

Using the results of the research, feedback from our consultation and baseline exercises, a number of key themes for priority and overarching activity have been set.

The Corporate Framework for Diversity and Equality

Delivery framework

Valuing diversity is one of four core values of Tower Hamlets Council. We promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve the life for everything living, working and visiting Tower Hamlets. We build upon this by working with the Tower Hamlets Partnership to provide accessible and responsive services that enable everyone to take part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough. Achieving this is central to delivering the Council's vision, is linked to the Strategic Plan priorities and objectives and forms a driving force within the Community Plan and key to creating a cohesive community.

Our aims and values

As a service provider we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the planning and delivery of our services in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status
- Promote good relations between communities and address negative stereotyping of any groups
- Ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process
- Tackle harassment relating to a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status

As an employer we will:

- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for our workforce in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement)
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse nature of the borough

We will recognise our community leadership role and use this to work towards a cohesive community in which inequality is tackled and equality promoted.

Our commitment is supported by a number of legal duties that require us to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, including:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Regulations on Religion and Faith 2004
- Employment Regulations on Sexual Orientation 2003
- Civil Partnership Act 2004

- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 Act
- Childrens Act (2004)

However under current legislation, the requirements to address inequality and discrimination and promote equality vary between equality 'strand'. For example, while under current legislation we are required to address discrimination against employees on the basis of all six equality strands, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religion / belief, it is only in relation to race, gender and disability that this duty extends to the provision of services and the active promotion of equality. We believe however that we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and inequality exists for individuals and groups belonging to all of the six equality strands. We are therefore committed to going beyond the requirements laid down in law to address all six equality strands and to do everything that we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote better understanding and respect between all people.

To demonstrate our commitment to all six equality strands, the Council has gone beyond the legal requirement to produce Equality Schemes in relation to race, gender and disability and has published Schemes covering Religion/Belief, Age and Sexual Orientation equality. Each Scheme sets out what we know about the profile of our community in relation to the relevant strand and the nature of inequality experienced by people as a result of this element of their identity. The Schemes also contain a summary of the action which the Council and partners will undertake to address inequality and discrimination in relation to this equality strand.

How we will deliver our commitment

Tackling discrimination and promoting equality requires action at corporate, directorate, service, team and individual levels. At a corporate level the six Equality Schemes and the overall Diversity and Equality Action Plan identifies priority areas for work on equalities across the organisation. The Diversity and Equality Action Plan is agreed by Cabinet annually and monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee six-monthly, along with a summary of progress on each of the Schemes.

Below we describe the processes and procedures we have put in place to embed the delivery of our commitment to promote equality in relation to all six strands within everything that we do as a Council:

- Undertake **equality impact assessments** of both new and existing policies and services
- Ensure that all our **team plans** incorporate relevant diversity and equality objectives and targets
- Ensure all new staff participate in Council **equality induction training** processes
- Ensure that our policies are compliant with **equality legislation**
- **Involve communities, staff and stakeholders** in the design, review

- and scrutiny of our services and employment practices
- Increase the extent to which our **workforce reflects the local community**
 - Using our **procurement** powers to makes sure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy
 - **Monitor the equality profile** of people using and benefiting from our services to enable us to identify groups which are not accessing services
 - **Involve all sectors of our community** in the design, review and scrutiny of our service delivery and employment practices
 - **Provide information and access** to our services in accessible ways

The Profile of Sexual Orientation in Tower Hamlets

Key Facts

- We have limited information regarding our LGB community
- It is likely that 10% of our population is LGB, indicating that there are potentially 23,900 LGB residents in our borough
- Our LGB community will reflect the diversity of our communities

It is difficult to estimate the size and profile of the LGB community in the borough as sexual orientation was not a specific category in the last Census. A national survey indicates that LGB people make up around 10% of the population in London and although the Census did not ask specific questions around sexual orientation, it did ask about those who were living in same sex couples.¹ This revealed that the borough has the fifth largest reported number of cohabiting same sex couples nationally, and the fourth largest in London. The thriving commercial night life also indicates that a significant number of LGB people living outside the area have a connection with the borough.

Tower Hamlets has a population of 239,000 residents. Over the next 10 to 15 years the borough is expected to see the largest and fastest population growth in London. Our rough 10% estimate indicates that there are potentially 23,900 LGB people living in Tower Hamlets.

We also know that LGB people are represented in all sections of our community in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, faith and disability. In line with our overall population it is likely that we have an ethnically diverse LGB population - just over half the population is white British, a third is Bangladeshi and the rest of the population is made up of a large number of much smaller but significant ethnic minority communities including African, Caribbean, Somali, Indian, and Chinese populations. Additionally, with almost 30% of the population being under the age of 19, there is a high likelihood that borough has a large proportion of young LGB people, as almost 30% of the population is under the age of 19. With 78% percent of residents in the last Census declaring that they have a religious belief many LGB people are likely to have a religious belief or have been brought up in a family with religious beliefs.

¹ National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Life Style (NASSL), 2000

Reasonable Adjustments

This section provides guidance about factors to take into account when delivering a service, running an activity or event, providing funding or scheduling meetings to ensure that you promote equality and do not adversely affect any individual or group as a result of their sexual orientation. It is important to note that these are intended to highlight some of the most common barriers to promotion of sexual equality, it is not a comprehensive guide to providing an equitable service and it is important that we take a proactive approach to identifying individual needs rather than presuming what we know the best solution. The key principle here is to ensure that it is clear that efforts will be made to accommodate needs and preferences based on sexual orientation and encourage staff, service users or residents to discuss their needs where they feel there may be a barrier to their access or involvement in an activity.

- Don't make assumptions – You cannot immediately see someone's sexual orientation in the same way that you can a person's skin colour and because many LGB people are not comfortable in being 'out' in the community they may appear invisible as far as our statistics are concerned. Therefore it is easy to forget or assume that they are not using our services. In fact it is important to intelligently assume the opposite and ensure that services are LGB inclusive - we estimate that roughly 10% of London's population is LGB this means that a significant percentage of our service users are likely to be LGB whether we are aware of it or not.
- Ask the question – Without recording information about who is using our services we cannot possibly know whether we are providing services that are equally accessible to all. That is why, with the exception of young people under the age of 16, it is mandatory for all services to undertake equality monitoring across all six strands including sexual orientation. The more likely invisibility of LGB people provides an added importance to asking the question. We understand that some staff find it difficult to ask the sexual orientation monitoring question and users can sometimes be offended by being asked the question. Service users are more likely to feel comfortable about answering the question if they understand why it is being asked, that is why we have produced postcards that help staff to explain the reasons behind equality monitoring. A copy of the corporate equality monitoring guidelines and postcard can be found on the Council's Internet.
- It's not just about sex – Being LGB is about more than defining ones sex life. It shapes the way people have experienced life, their identity, attitudes and needs in all areas of their lives. It is common for people to assume that being LGB is just about defining ones sex life and therefore fail to recognise that LGB service needs and experiences might be different to others. It is important understand that being LGB influences many aspects of a persons life and that like everyone people have multiple identities that services need to understand.

The Story So Far

Although this is the Council's first sexual orientation equality scheme, the Council has a strong record of working with partners, the local community and staff to tackle sexual orientation inequality. This is recognised in our continuous improvement from 28th to 17th and now 7th place in the Stonewall Workplace Equality index 2009.

In 2003 a groundbreaking piece of research into the needs of LGBT communities in the borough led to the formation of the Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum. The Forum, which brings together a wide range of public and third sector organisations with the LGB community, represents a borough wide commitment this agenda. It provides a platform for local people to challenge services on issues that affect their lives; homophobia, health and education are just some of the important issues explored in 2008.

The lives and contribution of LGBT people are recognised and celebrated in one of the largest programme of activities for LGBT History Month in London. Each year the Council supports the forum to coordinate a programme of events ranging from history walks to film events. The highlight of 2007 was the production of 'Out in Time' an exhibition about LGBT history of the East End. In 2008 the Council funded the now thriving LGBT parent support group Rainbow Parents. In 2009, in light of a recent homophobic attack in the borough, a borough wide 'No Place for Homophobic Hate' campaign was championed on billboards and advertising stands across the borough.

For a number of years an annual schools conference has been held at the beginning of History Month to support schools to challenge homophobia and promote equality. 'No Outsiders', a project that and creates more inclusive primary school environments by providing books and other resources to help kids to learn about families with two mums and two dads is being funded by the Council in a number of schools in the borough.

The Council takes a zero tolerance approach to homophobic hate crime and works in partnership with local agencies including the Police LGBT and community organisations, taking an integrated and coordinated approach to tackling all forms of hate. To ensure effective support for victims of homophobic crime, a Victim Support Homophobic and Transphobic Crime Worker is commissioned to provide specialist support to victims of LGBT crime and same sex domestic violence.

The borough has a shared aim to build 'One Tower Hamlets': a place where people from different backgrounds work together to tackle inequalities and make the borough a better place. In a borough where faith plays an important role, the space for dialogue on issues of sexuality and faith has also been created to promote cohesion

The strength of this Scheme is the strong tradition and of commitment to equality that underpins it.

Sexual Orientation Equality Priorities 2009-12

The Tower Hamlets 2020 Community Plan vision is to *'improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the borough'*. The priorities of this Scheme have been aligned to the five Community Plan themes to ensure that LGB equality is at the centre our work to achieve this vision. Set out in this section are the key LGB equality priorities that have emerged from research and consultation with residents, Council staff and services together with analysis of national research and information.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS

Celebrate Diversity & Promote Cohesion

Attitudes towards LGB people have changed significantly over the past decade. Research tells us that most people support the equal legal treatment of lesbians and gay men, and want to see anti-gay discrimination addressed.² We often hear that there is intolerance of gay people among faith communities but research tells us that the vast majority of religious people (83 per cent) believe that gay people should not be discriminated against and that people of faith are no more likely to be prejudiced than anyone else.

Laws have played an important role in combating anti-gay prejudice but as we know from our experience of challenging racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination real change comes about when difference is not simply tolerated but when it is valued and respected. To achieve this it is important to raise the visibility of LGB communities and celebrate their contributions and achievements as these are often not seen or heard in the mainstream media.

CASE STUDY: FAITH AND SEXUALITY DEBATE

To mark International Day against Homophobia a lunchtime discussion and question time event was held on the subject of faith and sexual orientation.

The event was developed in liaison with the LGBT and Muslim staff forums. It was chaired by the Chair of Tower Hamlets LGBT Forum and the council invited a range of people from different faith and LGBT organisations to speak. The event was widely advertised across the council to draw in non-LGBT staff. It was a great success with more than 100 people on attendance and generated a constructive and positive debate.

Objectives:

- Recognise the contributions and celebrate the lives of LGB people in Tower Hamlets through communications, arts and events
- Develop knowledge and understanding and promote respect for different ways of life. Challenge prejudice and discrimination towards LGB people
- Ensure that LGB people are visible in our media and publications and portray realistic and positive images of lesbian and gay people
- Ensure that community cohesion projects build trust, understanding and positive relationships between LGB people and wider community in the borough

² Living Together: British attitudes towards lesbian and gay people. (2007) Stonewall

Improve the involvement and participation of LGB people in decision making

In our borough there are a wide range structures and process for consultation and involvement with local residents but it is difficult to know how well LGB people are represented in these processes. Most respondents in our local survey felt that the Council is doing a good job but were less likely to feel that the Council involves LGB people than the population as a whole in decision making.

A recent equality impact assessment of our consultation and participation arrangements identified that LGB issues are infrequently raised at consultation events. LGB people may find it more difficult to raise these issues at events. Therefore it is important that consultation and engagement processes are inclusive of, and actively engage LGB people to ensure that their needs do inform the design and delivery of services.

A large percentage of respondents also said that they were uninvolved in the local community but expressed an interest in volunteering, particularly within the LGB community.

CASE STUDY: TOWER HAMLETS LGBT COMMUNITY FORUM

The Tower Hamlets LGBT Forum was established in October 2006 and works to engage the LGBT community in the borough, helping it to shape the services that local residents receive. Members of the LGBT Forum include Tower Hamlets Council, the PCT, police and local community and voluntary organisations. The LGBT Forum enables local residents to raise concerns and problems that they are experiencing in the borough and to work with partners to resolve these issues.

Objectives

- Ensure that consultation and engagement processes are inclusive of, and actively engage, LGB people
- Improve the monitoring of LGB people participating in consultation and participation activities
- Strengthen the capacity of local councillors to engage the local LGB community and get them actively involved in their neighbourhoods and local decision making.
- Develop LGB specific volunteering opportunities for local LGB people

Support a stronger LGB community

In Tower Hamlets there is a thriving gay social scene and many LGB people socialise in gay pubs and clubs in the borough. Apart from socialising in other neighbouring boroughs and Central London many (46%) say that they socialise on the Internet. When asked what kinds of places they would like to see for socialising locally there was a mix of responses that highlighted a demand for different types of environments for different sections of the

community. Responses included more venues for black gay men, gay community centres, non-gay pubs to be more accepting, baby friendly venues, women's bar/café and more social opportunities for LGB parents and carers.

We know that LGB people can be particularly at risk of experiencing loneliness and isolation. Within the community some groups of people such as LGB parents, older and younger LGB people and those from a BME background or those who have a faith may be particularly isolated. Older lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are 2.5 times as likely to live alone as heterosexual people. Our local study shows that many residents rely on other LGB people for friendship and support. The internet is a particular source of support for our LGB residents. We need to develop a stronger community support structure which responds to the needs of specific sections of the LGB community that may be particularly isolated.

Objectives

- Continue to support Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum as a central community resource, developing it to better support different sections of the LGB community.
- Develop dialogue and better partnership working between existing LGB groups in the borough to strengthen their capacity.
- Ensure that the allocation of mainstream community grants are inclusive of LGB projects and initiatives and used to address gaps in LGB community support
- Improve the level appropriate LGB information and advice and support available to LGB people in Tower Hamlets. Ensure that appropriate information, advice and support is available for LGB people who may be particularly isolated such as older and young LGB people, those from a BME background or who have a faith, and LGB parents
- Provide information, advice and social support using the Internet

A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

LGB Equality in the workplace

For many LGB people, the recent changes in employment legislation which make it illegal to discriminate against LGB people at work has not changed the culture of working environments enough to enable them to be open about their sexuality and be themselves at work.

It is estimated that as many as one in five LGB people still feel unable to reveal their sexual orientation. Many people still suffer discrimination at work; The Gay British Crime survey conducted by Stonewall identified that one in ten respondents was a victim of an incident committed by a work colleague. 27% of respondents of our local study said that they had experienced harassment or discrimination at work because of their sexual orientation. Of these 62% had experienced homophobic jokes, 41% said that they had been ignored because of their sexuality, and 38% had experienced verbal abuse.

In Tower Hamlets we want LGB people to feel valued and comfortable about being out in the workplace. As one of the borough's largest employers the Council has worked with the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to develop an inclusive LGB friendly environment and established good employment practice. As a result the Council is proud to have moved up from 28th to 17th to 7th place in the Index of top gay friendly employers over the past three years. More detailed information about our work to promote LGB equality as an employer is set out in the Employer section.

The Council will continue to strengthen its own LGB equality employment practices and in its leadership capacity will work with other employers to improve sexual orientation equality in the workplace across the borough.

Objectives

- Continue to develop an LGB friendly organisational culture
- Ensure that senior and political figures visibly communicate and champion sexual orientation equality to all staff across the organisation
- Promote good LGB employment practice amongst local partners and encourage them to join the Stonewall WEI
- In the procurement of services ensure suppliers and partner organisations have sexual orientation inclusive policies

Education for All

Schools have a crucial role to play in tackling homophobia and promoting sexual orientation equality. Homophobia in schools negatively affects all children, the views, opinions and behaviours of all pupils formulated today are likely to be carried into adulthood. The experiences of young LGB people at school today are likely to impact the rest of their lives.

A Stonewall study into the experiences of young LGB people in Britain's schools provides a picture of what school might be like for many of our LGB young people. It found that almost two thirds of young LGB pupils have experienced direct bullying. 92% of those bullied have been verbally abused, 41% have been physically assaulted and almost all said that they were learning in an environment where homophobic language is commonplace. Bullying can also take the form of text or cyber bullying. The study found that the majority of young people felt that there was neither an adult at home nor school who they can talk to about being gay because they did not want anyone at home or school to know that they are gay.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils reported that half of teachers never respond to homophobic language when they witness it and three in five of all pupils never intervene when they hear homophobic language, but instead become bystanders.

The impact of homophobic bullying is that young LGB people do not feel safe in school, over a third said that they were unhappy and reported that they do not like going to school as a result. LGB young people find it hard to be accepted at school and feel unable to be themselves. Most find that it impacts on their school work and half of those who have experienced homophobic bullying have skipped school because of it.

In terms of the curriculum most LGB pupils say that they have never been taught about lesbian and gay people or seen lesbian and gay issues addressed in class. Over half do not like playing team sport. Most young people reported to have no access to any information at school about lesbian and gay issues.

Outside of school only 15 per cent of young lesbian, gay and bisexual people have attended a gay youth group. Young people who attend such groups are much more likely to feel that there is an adult at home they can talk to about being gay and 32 per cent more likely to feel there is an adult at school they can talk to.

Lesbian and gay pupils are more likely to feel positive about school if their school has explicitly stated that homophobic bullying is against the rules. In schools that have said homophobic bullying is wrong, gay young people are 60 per cent more likely not to have been bullied.

CASE STUDY: NO OUTSIDERS PROJECT AND STEP OUT

Several schools are involved in the 'No Outsiders' project which aims to tackle homophobia in primary schools by exploring issues of sexual orientation through the use of age-appropriate resource packs which feature material that includes lesbian and gay people and same-sex parents.

Children's Services support Step Out, our youth group for LGBT young people. This group provides advice and support and a social space for our young people.

Objectives

- Develop steps to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying in schools including explicit homophobic bullying policies
- Provide staff with training to help them respond to, and prevent, homophobic bullying and support LGB pupils
- Provide LGB pupils with the information and support that they need.
- Extend our current initiatives in schools to continue integrating sexual orientation into the curriculum in a positive and constructive way
- Celebrate progress so that all pupils, parents, governors and staff know and understand the progress that is being made and so that other schools can learn from best practice
- Encourage school engagement with LGB parents and encourage LGB parents to become school governors.
- Provide LGB inclusive youth provision

Capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security

Stonewall highlight homelessness and harassment as two significant issues affecting the LGB community. There is a lack of specific research into the housing experiences of LGB people.

However, we do know that young LGB people are at particular risk of experiencing homelessness and its associative problems as they may be thrown out from their family home or decide to leave home to escape homophobia. Sexuality can be a direct cause of homelessness for young LGB people, they can be thrown out of their home or decide to leave home to escape homophobia. Coming to terms with their sexuality and the withdrawal of love and support from family and friends can lead to emotional or mental health difficulties, such as low self-esteem, depression and self-harming behaviour. They may also begin to use alcohol or drugs to try to cope with or block out issues arising from being LGB and homeless. It is important to recognise the vulnerability of LGB young people to homelessness.

LGB people can be harassed and victimized in their own home by neighbours or people who live in their area. Recent Stonewall research found that nearly one in six victims experienced a homophobic hate incident perpetrated by one or more offenders who live in the local area. Harassment can include name-calling, graffiti, criminal damage and over time even seemingly small incidents can cause extreme distress and fear, with people often too frightened to leave their own home. Many LGB people find it difficult to report these kind of incidents as homophobic hate as it forces them to be open about their sexuality. Housing providers have an important role to play in supporting LGB people to live safely in their homes and neighbourhoods.

Objectives

- Ensure that housing providers engage with lesbian and gay residents
- Ensure that Anti Social Behaviour procedures are clear about how to deal with homophobia and enable LGB residents to report homophobia anonymously
- Ensure that housing allocations policies and succession policies are compliant with the law on sexual orientation
- Develop understanding of homelessness amongst LGB young people as a vulnerable group Ensure that spatial strategies take into account the needs of LGB people

A SAFE & SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

“We want Tower Hamlets to be a place where LGB residents and visitors feel safe and confident in their homes and on the streets. Our services will ensure that LGB people are protected from risk of harm and are enabled to live a full and independent life.”

Enabling LGB people to live safely without fear or prejudice has to be the basic foundation of our work to promote sexual orientation equality. A recent Stonewall study identified that one in five lesbian and gay people in Britain have been a victim of one or more homophobic hate crimes or incidents in the last three years³. Over a third did not report hate incidents to the police because they did not believe they could or would do anything about them. Black and minority ethnic (BAME) LGB people are more likely to have experienced physical assault and lesbians are more likely to be were insulted or harassed because of their sexual orientation than gay men. Nearly one in six victims experienced a homophobic hate incident perpetrated by one or more offenders who live in the local area and one in ten was a victim of an incident committed by a work colleague.

47% of respondents in our local study said that they had been the victim of a homophobic incident, 79% had experienced verbal abuse, 41% threatening behaviour and 21% have experienced physical violence. 63% did not report the incident to the police, of which 37% felt that the Police could not do anything about it, 37% did not think it was serious enough and 14% feared a homophobic reaction.

A zero tolerance approach towards homophobic hate crime is taken in our borough. The Council works in partnership with local agencies including the Police and community organisations through the Race and Hate Inter Agency Forum (RHIAF) to take a holistic approach which involves protecting and supporting victims, deterring perpetrators and preventing hate crime by raising awareness and challenging prejudice. The current ‘No Place for Hate’ campaign aims to increase reporting of hate crime and includes targeted work to support the LGB community.

Case Study – Victim Support Homophobic and Transphobic Crime Worker

Adam Beresford is Tower Hamlets current Homophobic and Transphobic Crime Worker based at Victim Support. Adam’s role was commissioned by the Tower Hamlets Race and Hate Inter-Agency Forum in recognition that victims of homophobic crime need specialist support. Adam works with the Council’s Community Safety Team and Police LGBT liaison officer to provide one-to-one support to victims of LGBT crime and same sex domestic violence. He also undertakes community development and outreach work in the community.

³ Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey, Stonewall, 2008

Objectives

We will continue to challenge homophobic hate crime by:

- Encouraging LGB people to report hate incidents and tailoring our work to engage lesbians, families of LGB people, BME and young LGB people
- Encourage heterosexuals to report homophobic hate crimes and incidents
- Educating and inform lesbian and gay people about homophobic hate incidents
- Strengthening recording mechanisms
- Tackling homophobic bullying in schools
- Providing support and information to victims of hate crime and incidents
- Working with employers to tackle hate crime
- Working with the wider community to raise awareness and challenge homophobic prejudice

Supporting LGB Families

We want Tower Hamlets to be a place where LGB individuals and families are recognised, respected and supported.

Like most families, LGB families do not fit any single stereotype. They may:

- include children;
- these children may or may not live with their LGB parents;
- these children may or may not be the genetic children of LGB parents;
- may be living with their families who may or may not know about their sexuality;
- LGB people may have no contact with their birth families
- live alone, with a partner or with close friends

For these reasons recognising, respecting and supporting LGB families in all their varieties is important.

There are no national official figures detailing the number of LGBT parents, but some studies have estimated that approximately one in five LGBT people are parents, co-parents or have children.⁴ 14% of respondents in our local study reported that they have children, 19% said that they plan to have children and 27%% said that they would be interested in fostering or adoption. 53% of respondents' children live with them.

Choosing to become parents is a much more difficult process for LGB people, not just because of the prejudice that exists around LGB parenting but also because of the processes of adoption, surrogacy and artificial insemination. Nine in ten LGB people expect to face barriers to becoming foster parents because they are lesbian or gay.

⁴ Beyond Barriers, Stonewall Scotland 2002

While many gay and lesbian people struggle with the decision of whether or not to be open about their sexuality, gay and lesbian parents must make this same decision while taking into account the possible repercussions for their children. LGB parents and their children are often subject to prejudice because of their sexual orientation and can be very isolated. 18% of respondents who are parents said that their children have had negative experiences as a result of their parent's sexuality. Three in ten think they would be treated worse than heterosexuals if they wanted to enrol their child into a primary school or secondary school.⁵

The changes in society's attitudes towards LGB people means that LGB people are increasingly likely to explore their sexuality at an earlier age, with the overwhelming majority we surveyed coming out aged 25 or younger. We recognise that this is the first generation of young people where it is much more likely for young LGB people to feel comfortable about coming out as and who are the first to navigate what it is like to be young and gay. 39% said that they came out between 16-19 years of age and 21% said that they came out between 12 -16 years of age. For young people, discovering and coming to terms with their sexuality is often a difficult and emotional time in their lives and they need extra support and acceptance to counteract feelings of alienation, exclusion, isolation and sometimes condemnation. If rejected by their families LGB young people are vulnerable to homelessness or being taken into care. Positive parental and family support of their sexuality is critical for young people. Families of LGB people can also be isolated and find it difficult to understand their child's or relative's sexuality, as such supporting family members to understand and support LGB people is important.

CASE STUDY: RAINBOW PARENTS

Rainbow Parents is a support and social group for lesbian and gay parents. Rainbow Parents was launched in 2008 as part of that year's LGBT History Month. The group has since gone from strength to strength and during 2009 LGBT History Month it co-ordinated a range of LGBT parenting workshops. The group also holds a weekly LGBT parents play session at the Eve Armsby Childrens Centre.

Objectives

- Ensure that fostering and adoption services are promoted to the LGB community and appropriate support is provided to LGB parents wishing to foster or adopt
- Support LGB Parents and make available appropriate information, advice and support for LGB people thinking about becoming parents
- Support LGB young people discovering or coming to terms with their sexuality
- Support parents and families of LGB people

⁵ Serves You Right

Equal access to health and social care

LGB people have the same health and social care needs as heterosexual people but their access to services can be different. Local LGB people would like to see their needs more effectively considered in the design and delivery of health and social care services.

Many LGB people say that they do not feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation to doctors and health professionals for fear of receiving poorer treatment, prejudice and discrimination.⁶ 19% of respondents from the local needs survey felt unable to tell GPs/ health services about their sexual identity and 10% said that they had faced homophobia in trying to access GPs or health centres.

Studies show that LGB people are more likely to suffer from poor mental health, psychological distress and are more likely to experience substance use disorders despite less than 50% visiting a GP or counsellor in relation to their health problems. 46% of respondents in the Tower Hamlets survey said that they had experienced depression, 7% had self harmed and 20% had experienced suicidal thoughts. Gay and bisexual men remain the group at the greatest risk of getting infected with HIV in the UK. They are also at higher risk from sexually transmitted diseases.

Unlike heterosexual adults many LGB adults and in particular older people do not necessarily expect to be cared for by members of their family or kin and may have greater need for social care. This is because LGB people are twice as likely to be single, 2.5 times more likely to live alone and 4.5 times as likely to have no children. Despite the greater demand many LGB older people are reluctant to access social care in fear of negative responses from institutions. These include fear of homophobic attitudes and behaviour of staff, a lack of awareness about the specific needs of LGB adults, hostility from other service users, being unable to maintain friendships with other gay adults or to maintain a relationship with a partner and general feelings of social isolation and not fitting in. Key to achieving appropriate services for LGB people is good practice that personalises support for them.

Objectives

- Improve understanding of LGB specific health and social care needs, including those of older LGB people in Tower Hamlets and ensure they better inform the design and delivery of health and social services. This work should include attention in the following areas:
 - The needs of older LGB people
 - Mental health
 - HIV
 - Access and inclusiveness of primary care services

⁶ Serves You Right - Stonewall

- Recognise the barriers that older LGB people face in accessing social care services and provide sensitive and appropriate care to LGB adults and older people.
- Provide LGB awareness training to care staff.
- Ensure that current personalisation agenda is responsive to the needs of LGB people

Promoting LGB equality as an employer

The Council is committed to promoting LGB equality as an employer and is proud to rank 7th place in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index of top 100 gay friendly employers. We have strengthened our capacity to deliver on this commitment by bringing together the PCT and Council HR functions and have established a joint Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy.

Recruitment and Selection

The council aims to positively promote the council as an employer and attract and select the best people for jobs so as to build a quality workforce which reflects the community. All Council recruitment adverts carry the Stonewall logo and additional advertising is included in the gay press so communicate to all potential applicants that the Council is a gay friendly and encourage LGB people to apply. In order to ensure that all forms of discrimination are eradicated, monitoring on the basis of sexual orientation and analysis is undertaken in respect of recruitment activity as well as levels of retention across age ranges.

Progression and Career Development

There council is committed to investing in and developing all employees and reviews the progression of employees within the organisation through the grade ranges monitor equality of opportunity. The Council provides a comprehensive range of leadership and management development programmes open to all staff leading to awards from the Institute of Leadership and Management. These programmes are aim to support managers and aspiring managers to gain qualifications whilst developing their potential to work in leadership and management posts.

Training and Development

The ability to build on or acquire new skills within an employee's job is a key feature of the Council's learning and development programme and the Corporate Induction. A wide range of learning opportunities are provided and employees are supported in learning through their work as the Council believes that investment in employees shows through in the quality of work and a high level of staff engagement. Consequently, the uptake of learning and development events is recorded by sexual orientation to ensure that every employee has access to continuous professional development.

The Council's corporate learning and development programme includes a wide range of diversity and equality training, all of which cover all six equality strands including sexual orientation equality. The programme also includes specific training sexuality awareness designed to: increase awareness of issues facing staff and customers who are LGB; improve understanding of how to provide services that are responsive to the needs of LGB customers; and combat discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexuality.

Working conditions and Working Environment

The Council has policies and procedures in place to promote equality of opportunity and to address circumstances where an employee believes that they have been disadvantaged. All employee benefits offered by the Council such as pensions and paternity leave are accessible to all staff regardless of sexual orientation. Our Combating Harassment and Discrimination Procedure explicitly recognises anti-gay bullying and harassment and communicates zero-tolerance to this behaviour.

In order to ensure that managers and employees are aware of their responsibilities in working with diversity and progressing equalities in the workplace incorporating regulations relating to Sexual Orientation; regular learning opportunities are offered to employees. The Council's 2007 staff survey showed that 65% of LGB staff felt that Tower Hamlets had improved the way it provides equality of opportunity to the different equality groups.

Additionally, there is an LGBT Staff Forum which meets on a quarterly basis and is supported by Corporate Human Resources and the Diversity and Equalities Team. The purpose of the LGBT Staff Forum is to give LGBT employees a means of raising collective issues in relation to their employment and provide a means for the Council to consult on employment policies and practices to help ensure that the Council has the mechanisms in place to recruit and retain LGBT staff.

Objectives

- Continue to train staff and managers to keep them up-to-date with employment legislation and terms and conditions as they apply to lesbian and gay staff and to improve their confidence to promote sexual orientation equality in the workplace and in the delivery of services.
- Continue to impact assess all new and existing policies to ensure they are inclusive and when reviewing policies, ensure the language used explicitly communicates equality, diversity and are inclusive of lesbian and gay staff.
- Continue to monitor, analyse and report on sexual orientation in staff attitude surveys and at all stages of the employment cycle from recruitment through to exit.
- Review bullying and harassment policies and promote them to all staff, ensuring they communicate a zero tolerance to homophobic bullying.
- Continue to support the Council's LGBT Staff Forum to provide LGB staff with a safe place to raise staff issues.
- Organise and promote LGB awareness raising events and activities for non-LGB staff to challenge prejudice and homophobia.
- Recognise and celebrate the contributions of LGB people through events during LGBT History Month and throughout the year.
- Ensure that the Council's counselling service provides LGB sensitive counselling offering LGB counsellors or LGB trained counsellors.

Delivering the Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme objectives, 2009-12

Drawing on the findings outlined above, we have identified a number of key areas in which the Council along with its partners needs to take action to ensure that we promote equality for everyone living, working or visiting Tower Hamlets regardless of their sexual orientation. This action plan outlines what we will undertake over the next three years.

ONE TOWER HAMLETS ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
Celebrate Diversity & Promote Cohesion	Recognise the contributions and celebrate the lives of LGB people in Tower Hamlets through communications, arts and events	Continue to use East End Life to recognise the contributions of LGB people in Tower Hamlets and promote understanding and respect for LGB people.	Head of Communications	Ongoing
	Develop knowledge and understanding and promote respect for different ways of life.	Continue to deliver a programme of arts and events that is inclusive of LGB people including specific annual events for LGBT History Month	Service Head Scrutiny and Equalities	
	Challenge prejudice and discrimination towards LGB people.	See actions under Safe and Supportive		
	Ensure that LGB people are visible in our media	Continue to ensure that image	Stakeholders	March

	and publications and portray realistic and positive images of lesbian and gay people.	banks are inclusive of LGB people and our publications and advertising portray realistic and positive images of LGB people. Use East End to promote positive images of LGB people in the borough	Engagement & Participation Manager Head of Communications	2010
	Ensure that community cohesion projects build trust, understanding and positive relationships between LGB people and wider community in the borough.	Review community cohesion principles to embed One Tower Hamlets in service delivery and development: Learning from existing community cohesion initiatives assessed to develop proposals for ensuring that cohesion is evidenced and embedded into service planning and delivery	Service Head: Scrutiny and Equalities	Sept 2009
Improve the involvement and participation of LGB people in decision making	Ensure that consultation and engagement processes are inclusive of, and actively engage LGB people.	Develop the role of the LGBT Community Forum as a key network that links up LGB organisations and is connected to the Tower Hamlets Partnership.	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities	Sept 2009
	Improve the monitoring of LGB people participating in consultation and participation activities	Improve monitoring of sexual orientation in THP activities	Head Participation & Engagement Team	March 2010

	<p>Strengthen the capacity of local councillors to engage the local LGB community and get them actively involved in their neighbourhoods and local decision making.</p>	<p>Establish an LGB Member Champion. Work with the LGBT Community Forum to establish better communication between LGB residents and councillors Deliver LGB awareness training for councillors</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
	<p>Develop volunteering opportunities for local LGB people</p>	<p>Work with the LGBT Community Forum and Tower Hamlets Partnership to develop a volunteering opportunities for LGBT residents</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
<p>Support a stronger LGB community</p>	<p>Continue to support Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum as a central community resource, developing it to better support different sections of the LGB community. Develop dialogue and better partnership working between existing LGB groups in the borough to strengthen their capacity.</p>	<p>Recruit LGB Community Forum Engagement Worker to develop and coordinate the Forum Establish a comprehensive database of LGB organisations in the borough and involve them in the work of the LGBT Community Forum Monitor and report on the allocation of mainstream grants to LGB projects to CESC</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010 March 2010</p>
	<p>Ensure that the allocation of mainstream community grants are inclusive of LGB projects and initiatives and used to address gaps in LGB</p>		<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010</p>

	<p>community support</p> <p>Improve the level appropriate LGB information and advice and support available to LGB people in Tower Hamlets. Ensure that appropriate information, advice and support is available for LGB people who may be particularly isolated such as older and younger LGB people, those from a BME background or who have a faith, and LGB parents.</p> <p>Provide information, advice and social support using the Internet.</p>	<p>annually</p> <p>Develop the Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum Website as a comprehensive hub of information for LGB communities.</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
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A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
LGB Equality in the workplace	<p>Continue to develop an LGB friendly organisational culture</p>	<p>Create the opportunity for dialogue around issues of sexual orientation - deliver a minimum of two council wide events</p> <p>Train managers to improve their confidence in promoting LGB equality in the workplace.</p> <p>Further enhance the Councils work in relation to the Stonewall</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>March 2010</p>

	<p>Ensure that senior and political figures visibly communicate and champion sexual orientation equality to all staff across the organisation</p> <p>Promote good LGBT employment practice amongst local partners and encourage them to join the Stonewall WEI</p> <p>In the procurement of services ensure suppliers and partner organisations have sexual orientation inclusive policies</p>	<p>Diversity Champions Programme</p> <p>Establish Member champion for LGBT equality</p> <p>Deliver a LGBT Equality Workplace Conference for local organisations</p> <p>Review procurement framework to ensure that our suppliers are required to demonstrate that they do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p> <p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p> <p>Corporate Procurement Team</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p>
<p>Education for All</p>	<p>Develop steps to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying in schools including explicit homophobic bullying policies</p>	<p>Awareness raising of the range of support available to parents and carers via revised information leaflet on how to tackle bullying and discrimination.</p> <p>100% action and monitoring of all reported cases of homophobic bullying.</p> <p>10% increase in reporting of discriminatory incidents in Schools including homophobic bullying.</p> <p>30 Schools to participate in one day workshops on bullying and discrimination and impact of pupils</p>	<p>Behaviour Improvement Programme</p> <p>Manager/ Head of Equalities & Parental Engagement/ Stakeholder Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Manager/Development Manager for Schools Equalities Initiative</p>	<p>March 2011</p>

		behaviour on others. Increased awareness of reporting homophobia via new website launched in April 2009. Provide support to school coordinators to use the new incidents reporting form as it includes homophobic bullying Develop a new information leaflet for young people to inform them of homophobic bullying policies and the availability of the bullying help line.	Behaviour Improvement Programme Manager	
Provide staff with training to help them respond to, and prevent, homophobic bullying and support LGB pupils. Provide LGB pupils with the information and support that they need.	Evaluation and possible roll out to further 8 Schools of pilot No Outsiders Project with aim of staff feeling confident in dealing with homophobic bullying. Monitor use of helpline and LGB calls. Ensure AMP website provides information about LGB services for young people Ensure new Family Information	Head of Equalities & Parental Engagement Sue McCauley Behaviour Improvement Programme Manager Head of Youth & Community Service		

			Services includes LGB information	Stakeholders Engagement & Participation Mgr	
Extend our current initiatives in schools to continue integrating sexual orientation into the curriculum in a positive and constructive way	Evaluation and possible roll out to further 8 Schools of pilot No Outsiders Project with aim of staff feeling confident in dealing with homophobic bullying.	Head of Equalities & Parental Engagement			
Celebrate progress so that all pupils, parents, governors and staff know and understand the progress that is being made and so that other schools can learn from best practice.	Annual anti-bullying conference and LGBT History month celebrate successes	Behaviour Improvement Programme Manager			
Provide support to lesbian and gay school staff	Discuss the creation of a LGB staff group project to raise awareness for schools and union reps.	Head of Equalities & Parental Engagement Jacinta Gasson			
Encourage school engagement with LGB parents and encourage LGB parents to become school governors.	Publicise the Parent and Community governor partnership training for LGB parents interested in becoming governors.	Lisa Zychowicz			
Provide LGB inclusive youth provision	Further develop links with Step Forward LGBT Youth Group	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities			March 2010

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
To enjoy a comfortable standard of living, with independence and security	Ensure that housing providers engage with lesbian and gay residents.	Progress through the TH Housing Forum to promote clarity within all providers policies with regard to Homophobia	D&R Housing Strategy	Sept 2010
	Ensure that Anti Social Behaviour procedures are clear about how to deal with homophobia and enable LGB residents to report homophobia anonymously.			
	Ensure that housing allocations policies and succession policies are compliant with the law on sexual orientation	Include as part of Lettings Review to be completed 2009/10	Strategic Housing Manager	March 2010
	Develop understanding of homelessness amongst LGB young people as a vulnerable group	Work with homelessness services and housing providers to explore experiences of homelessness amongst young LGB people in Tower Hamlets	Service Head Scrutiny and Equalities	March 2010
	Ensure that spatial strategies take into account the needs of LGB people	Complete Town Centre Spatial Strategy and Night Time Economy Strategy and ensure the needs of the LGBT communities are considered	Strategic Planning	Sept 09

A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
Capability to live in physical security	Encourage LGB people to report hate incidents and tailoring our work to engage lesbians, families of LGB people, BME and young LGB people	<p>Race and Hate Interagency Forum (RHIAF) Action Plan sets out how the partnership will tackle Homophobia. Key actions for the HCPPT are as follows:</p> <p>Maintain and develop the Third Party Reporting Project to increase reporting of hate incidents and foster effective joint working amongst partner agencies involved where 100% of Third Party Reports monitored and actioned (baseline of 18).</p> <p>If funding confirmed commission specialist hate crime victim support services where 100% of hate incidents reported to Police are contacted and 50% engaged with service and outreach with</p>	LBTH CSS Hate Crime Policy & Partnership Team	March 2010
	Encourage heterosexuals to report homophobic hate crimes and incidents			
	Educate and inform lesbian and gay people about homophobic hate incidents			
	Strengthen recording mechanisms			
	Provide support and information to victims of hate crime and incidents			
	Work with employers to tackle hate crime			
	Work with the wider community to raise awareness and challenge homophobic prejudice			

		<p>LGBT communities, local businesses and families.</p> <p>If funding confirmed maintain and develop the No Place for Hate Champions Project where 3 targeted hate crime training, workshops and outreach activities delivered per Champion.</p> <p>Implement recommendations from Hate Crime Victim's Needs Research Report for increased satisfaction with services by victims of hate crime measured through satisfaction questionnaires.</p> <p>Continue to deliver awareness campaign promoting clear messages that Tower Hamlets is No Place for Hate including Homophobic Hate – 100% increase in sign up to NPFH Pledge (baseline of 50), 24 outreach activities (including LGBT communities and events) and Evaluation Report.</p>	
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	<p>Ensure that fostering and adoption services are promoted to the LGB community and appropriate support is provided to LGB parents wishing to foster or adopt.</p>	<p>To work with partners to ensure 100% of identified perpetrators of homophobic hate incidents reported to the Council are actioned.</p> <p>To work with partners to ensure 42% sanction detection rate for perpetrators of homophobic hate (This target is to be achieved by the Police).</p> <p>Hate Incidents Panel - Coordination of multi-agency panel which ensures a coordinated response to all homophobic hate incidents reported to Council.</p> <p>Work with partners in ensuring homophobic hate incidents are recorded effectively.</p>	<p>Stakeholders Engagement & Participation Mgr, (CS)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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	<p>Support LGBT Parents and make available appropriate information, advice and support for LGBT people thinking about becoming parents.</p>	<p>The Stakeholder Engagement and Participation Team have close links with the Fostering and Adoption Service and will actively promote these services through the Family Information Service and Children's Centres</p>	<p>Service Manager, Family Support & Protection Service Manager, Resources (CS)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Support LGBT young people discovering or coming to terms with their sexuality</p>	<p>Work with LGBT Community Forum and Step Forward LGBT Youth Group to ensure that information is available.</p>	<p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>Sept 2010</p>
	<p>Support parents and families of LGBT people</p>	<p>Provide support to Rainbow Parents – LGBT Parent Support Group</p>	<p>Head of Equalities & Parental Engagement</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
Equal access to health and social care	<p>Improve understanding of LGB specific health and social care needs, including those of older LGB people in Tower Hamlets and ensure they better inform the design and delivery of health and social services. This work should include attention in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of older LGB people • Mental health • HIV • Access and inclusiveness of primary care services 	<p>Working in partnership with PCT, refresh Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, including a specific focus on under-represented groups</p>	<p>Service Head Commissioning & Strategy</p>	<p>July 2010</p>
	<p>Recognise the barriers that older LGB people face in accessing social care services and provide sensitive and appropriate care to LGB adults and older people.</p>	<p>Deliver a conference based on the findings of the Older LGB Needs Research Report and work with services to explore the issues raised.</p> <p>Support the work of Age Concern LGB Group.</p>	<p>Service Head Scrutiny & Equalities</p> <p>Service Head Older People & Homelessness</p>	<p>March 2010</p>
	<p>Provide LGB awareness training to care staff.</p>	<p>Develop safeguarding training and programme with learning and development.</p>		
	<p>Ensure that current personalisation agenda is</p>	<p>Promote and increase the use</p>	<p>Joint</p>	<p>March</p>

	<p>of Direct Payment and personalisation to promote choice and control.</p> <p>Improve representation of LGB people on Local Involvement Network and develop links between the Network and the LGBT Community Forum</p>	<p>Commissioning Mgr Learning Disabilities</p> <p>Head Participation & Engagement Team</p> <p>Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>March 2010</p>
<p>responsive to the needs of LGB people</p> <p>Involve LGB people in health and social care services through to ensure that it is working for them.</p>			

PROMOTING AGE EQUALITY AS AN EMPLOYER ACTIONS

Priority	Objectives	Actions	By whom	By when
<p>Promote LGB equality as an employer</p>	<p>Continue to train staff and managers to keep them up-to-date with employment legislation and terms and conditions as they apply to lesbian and gay staff and to improve their confidence to promote sexual orientation equality in the workplace and in the delivery of services.</p>	<p>Include appropriate training content as part of the Council's Learning and Development Programme.</p> <p>Ensure new managers induction includes briefings on key HR policies and good practice</p>	<p>Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Workforce Strategy & Equalities</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>Continue to impact assess all new and existing policies to ensure they are inclusive and when reviewing policies, ensure the language used explicitly communicates equality, diversity and are inclusive of lesbian and gay staff.</p>	<p>Carry HR 3 year programme of Equality Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Consult with staff forum as and inform group of any findings and recommendations as appropriate</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Human Resources</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>Continue to monitor, analyse and report on sexual orientation in staff attitude surveys and at all stages of the employment cycle from recruitment through to exit.</p>	<p>Include LGB data in annual Equality Schemes Employment Monitoring Report and analysis of findings and recommendations presented to CESG.</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Human Resources</p>	<p>On-going Annually</p>

			Undertake a comparison of responses from LGB staff in 2009 staff survey compared to 2007 and report to staff forum.	Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Strategy & Equalities	March 2010
	Review bullying and harassment policies and promote them to all staff, ensuring they communicate a zero tolerance to homophobic bullying.	Produce Fair Employment Policy, publicise its implementation and brief managers	Head of Corporate Human Resources	December 2009	
	Continue to support the Council's LGBT Staff Forum to provide LGB staff with a safe place to raise staff issues.	Coordinate and support quarterly LGBT Staff Forum meetings	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities	On-going	
	Organise and promote LGB awareness raising events and activities for non-LGB staff to challenge prejudice and homophobia	Increase awareness of LGB issues by organising events for staff and including appropriate content in Managers Briefing and Pulling Together	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities Head of Corporate Human Resources	On-going	
	Recognise and celebrate the contributions of LGB people through events during LGBT History Month and throughout the year.	Plan schedule of events for LGBT History Month each year	Service Head, Scrutiny and Equalities Head of	On-going	

	Ensure that the Council's counselling service provides LGB sensitive counselling offering LGB counsellors or LGB trained counsellors.	Provision to continue to be included in future Employee Assistance Programme contracts and trained counsellors Occupational Health refer employees to	Corporate Human Resources Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Workforce Strategy & Equalities	On-going