

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**MINUTES OF THE CABINET****HELD AT 5.34 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 9 JANUARY 2018****C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG****Members Present:**

Mayor John Biggs	
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing)
Councillor Amina Ali	(Cabinet Member for Environment)
Councillor Rachel Blake	(Cabinet Member for Strategic Development & Waste)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Cabinet Member for Community Safety)
Councillor David Edgar	(Cabinet Member for Resources)
Councillor Denise Jones	(Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Services)
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Youth)
Councillor Joshua Peck	(Cabinet Member for Work & Economic Growth)
Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs	(Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services)

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Dave Chesterton	(Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader of the Conservative Group)

Officers Present:

Zena Cooke	(Corporate Director, Resources)
Janet Fasan	(Divisional Director, Legal)
Debbie Jones	(Corporate Director, Children's)
Tom McCourt	(Strategic Director)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Owen Whalley	(Divisional Director, Planning & Building Control)
Stephen Bramah	(Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)
David Courcoux	(Head of the Mayor's Office)
Matthew Mannion	(Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Asmat Hussain (Corporate Director, Governance) for whom Janet Fasan (Divisional Director Legal Services) was deputising.
- Ann Sutcliffe (Acting Corporate Director, Place) for whom Owen Whalley (Divisional Director, Planning and Building Control) was deputising.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in relation to Agenda Item 5.4 (Fees and Charges 2018/19) were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Sirajul Islam (Council Tenant)
- Councillor Amina Ali (Council Tenant)
- Councillor Asma Begum (Housing Association Tenant)

However, it was noted that regulations provided for a dispensation for Councillors in this situation and so they would participate in the meeting.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Tuesday 19 December be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

4. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

No Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions had been received in advance of the meeting. However, it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a meeting arranged for Monday 15 January where they would be scrutinising the Executive's draft budget proposals. A response would be provided to the Executive in time for the Cabinet meeting on 30 January 2018.

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

Nil items.

5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 The Council's 2018-19 Budget Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-21

The Supplemental Pack circulated to Members in advance of the meeting was tabled and noted.

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report proposing a draft Budget for consultation. He explained that in February 2017 the Council had agreed a three year budget plan. This report therefore provided an update to that previous report as well as adding on an additional year 2020-21 to maintain the three year Medium Term Financial Strategy.

He took Members through the report including highlighting a number of points including the funding pressures the Council was under from government cuts,

the introduction of a London-wide business rates retention pilot scheme and the impact of demographic and inflationary changes. The budget was also specifically prepared to focus on the Council's identified priority areas.

The report also set out specific growth plans such as extending free school meals, more money for tackling anti-social behaviour and efforts to deal with air quality. Savings identified included on back-office functions, introducing new LED streetlights and better use of Council assets.

Cabinet discussed the report and noted a number of issues including:

- The investment in children's services for the most vulnerable especially around children's social care.
- The funding for supporting residents to find work, such as training more childcare staff and launching the Young Workpath service.
- The commitment to support private renters with increased enforcement work and the private renters' charter.
- A new air quality assistant to help drive the air quality action plan forward.
- Pilot schemes for neighbourhood management teams to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- The growth bid for adult social care due to the predicted population growth increasing demand for those services, especially amongst the elderly.
- Work to recruit environmental health staff with a particular focus on encouraging student placements.
- The funding for youth services being the largest per young person in the country.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report. He noted the impact the required budget cuts would have on certain services but considered the proposals were judiciously prepared and had an important focus on key areas. He then took Cabinet through each of the recommendations, noting that, whilst the main budget proposals were to be put out for consultation, there were a number of linked items that were for decision at this meeting. He **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To propose a draft General Fund Revenue Funding Requirement of £344.299m subject to any changes arising from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement.
2. To propose a Band D Council Tax of £986.14 for 2018-19 to be referred to Full Council for consideration.
3. To agree to increase the Council Tax empty homes premium from 50% to 100%.
4. To confirm the Council's decision to be included in the London-wide business rates retention pilot from the 1st April 2018.

5. To note that, under section 23 of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 the Authority must implement a rent reduction of 1% for four years starting in 2016-17, and consequently to agree an average weekly rent reduction of 1% to take effect from the first rent week of April 2018. This equates to an average rent reduction of £1.14 per week for 2018-19.
6. To agree that the average weekly tenanted service charge will increase by 4% from the first rent week in April 2018.
7. To note the refreshed priorities and outcomes (Paragraph 3.2.4) for the final year of the three year Strategic Plan agreed by Cabinet in April 2016.
8. To note the following:

General Fund Revenue Budget for 2018-19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 to 2020-21

The initial budget proposal and Council Tax for 2018-19 together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix 1A to the report.

Budget Consultation

The outcome of consultation with business ratepayers, residents and other stakeholders will be reported to Cabinet on the 30th January 2018.

Funding

The funding available for 2018-19 and the indications and forecasts for future years as set out in Section 3.4 of the report.

Growth and Inflation

The risks identified from potential growth and inflation commitments arising in 2018-19 and future years together with new initiatives identified as Mayoral Priority Growth as set out in Section 3.5 of the report and Appendix 3 to the report.

Savings

New proposed saving items to be delivered in 2018-19 and 2020-21 as set out in Section 3.6 of the report and Appendix 4 to the report.

Financial Risks: Reserves and Contingencies

The strategic budget risks and opportunities as set out in Section 3.7 of the report and the assessment of risk as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report.

Reserves and Balances

The proposed approach to the strategic use of reserves as set out in Section 3.8 of the report and the projected movement in Reserves as detailed Appendix 7 to the report.

Schools Funding

The position for schools' funding including the Dedicated Schools Grant as set out in Section 3.9 of the report.

Housing Revenue Account

The proposals for Rent and Tenanted Service Charge Setting – 2018-19 and Equalities impact assessment set out in Section 3.10 of the report and Appendix 8 to the report.

5.2 Council Tax Base 2018/19

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He stated that this was a technical report that set out how the Council Tax Base was calculated.

The **Mayor** noted that the Borough had experienced the biggest increase in properties in the country which brought with it additional Council Tax income but also extra pressure on services. He **agreed** the recommendation as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, that the amount calculated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as its Council Tax Base for the year 2018/19 shall be 95,095.

5.3 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018/19

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He explained that it was proposed to retain the existing Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) unchanged since last year.

It was noted that there had been some concern about some self-employed local residents and that any in financial hardship were encouraged to contact the Council who could then review the situation. There was also a 'tackling poverty fund' for those severely impacted when placed on Universal Credit.

The **Mayor** noted the proposals and the listed mitigation measures. He highlighted that the LCTRS was amongst the most generous in the country. He **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree that the existing LCTRS remains for 2018/19 including the hardship provision in the scheme
2. To note the package of support that has been put in place for self-employed residents and disabled non-dependants.

5.4 Fees and Charges 2018/19

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He highlighted that most fees and charges were rising with inflation and that any higher increases or new rates were listed in the report.

The **Mayor** agreed the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the proposed increase to discretionary fees and charges by a minimum of CPI (2.9%) or RPI (3.9%) rounded up to the nearest 5p, 10p etc, with effect from 1st April 2018
2. To approve proposed increases above CPI 2.9% for the following areas;
 - a. Integrated Early Years Services
 - b. Sports & Physical Activities
 - c. Street Trading
 - d. Pre application
 - e. Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages
 - f. Idea Store and Idea Store Learning
3. To approve New Charges proposed in the following areas;
 - a. Parking – Residents and Car Club permits, ranging from £25 to £1,300
 - b. Street Trading - Use of Markets Equipment by traders / non traders, £5 / £30 per day
 - c. Development Management – Pre-application advice, ranging from £885 to £4,000
4. To approve proposed new parking concessions for the area around Roman Road market only as specified in Section 3.4.4 and 3.4.5 of the report. The new charges will be implemented immediately once approved.
5. To agree the detailed list of proposed changes within

Health, Adults & Community as set out in Section 3.2 of the report and **Appendix 1** to the report.

Children's Services as set out in Section 3.3 of the report and **Appendix 2** to the report.

Place as set out in Section 3.4 of the report and **Appendix 3** to the report.

Governance as set out in Section 3.5 of the report and **Appendix 4** to the report.

Resources as set out in Section 3.6 of the report and **Appendix 5** to the report.

6. To note the revised **Statutory** fees and charges as set out in **Appendix 6** to the report with effect from 1st April 2018. The statutory planning fees for 2017-18 now incorporates the proposed 20% fee increase that will come into effect on 1st January 2018.

5.5 List of Recent Individual Executive Mayoral Decisions

The **Mayor** introduced and the report noting recent Individual Mayoral Decisions. He **agreed** the recommendation as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the Individual Mayoral Decisions set out in the Appendices to the report.

6. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Nil items.

8. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 6.17 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS