

The Council's Strategic Plan 2009/10-2011/12

Summary Year 1 2009/10

A message from the Leader

I am pleased to present the summary for year one of the Council's Strategic Plan for 2009/10–2011/12. It sets out our plans to further improve services for the coming year and details activities that demonstrate how we will help deliver our vision of improving the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets.

The Community Plan 2020 and the Local Area Agreement provide a clear context for the development of the Council's Strategic Plan. There is also a solid foundation on which to build for the year ahead.

Once again 2008/09 was a year of considerable progress. The Council achieved a 4 star overall rating in the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment. According to the Audit Commission, Tower Hamlets Council is performing strongly and was assessed as having outstanding services for children and adults. Indeed we are the only Council to have had both services top-rated for the last three years.

At the centre of our work, and underpinning each of the themes in our Community Plan, is the commitment to build One Tower Hamlets, a borough where everyone can access the same opportunities. To this end we have taken steps to ensure that we meet the highest level (five) of the Equality Standard for Local Government – a commitment that was recognised when Tower Hamlets became the first council in the country to receive the Equality Mark.

We've also been recognised for our commitment to innovation with Beacon awards for Reducing Re-offending; Preventing and Tackling Child Poverty; and the Positive Engagement of Older People, in addition to the 6 Beacon awards we've already obtained over the last six years.

Our continually improving services are also recognised by local people. In relation to resident satisfaction, for example, 69% of residents say we are doing a good job.

While these achievements are important – and wouldn't be achieved without the commitment and hard work of staff – there is still much to do. The Strategic Plan is our road map: it keeps us on track to further improve our services and the quality of life for local people.

We all – staff and councillors – have a part to play in making more improvements in the first year of our new Strategic Plan. I am sure that at the end of the year, we will be reporting further successes.

Councillor Lutfur Rahman
Leader of the Council

What is the Strategic Plan?

The new Strategic Plan 2009/10-11/12 Summary describes the Council's overall aims and objectives, the improved outcomes intended for people who live and work in the borough, and the actions to be taken to deliver that improvement in 2009/10

Each year, services across the Council – in consultation with key stakeholders – help to draw up a new action plan with activities that they will carry out in the forthcoming year to improve the Councils' performance and deliver the goals of the Strategic Plan. These key initiatives reflect the significant change or improvement activity which will be our focus for the year ahead. Within the Council each directorate and service, will develop more detailed action plans demonstrating how they contribute to the achievement of the priority outcomes.

Our Vision

The Council's vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. It is a vision that is shared by all partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership, which comprises residents, the Council and other public service providers, businesses, faith communities and the voluntary and community sector.

The five major themes contained in the Strategic Plan set out the means by which our vision will be delivered. These themes are:

- One Tower Hamlets
- A Great Place to Live
- A Prosperous Community
- A Safe and Supportive Community
- A Healthy Community

Although One Tower Hamlets underpins all themes, it is included in the Strategic Plan as a separate theme. Each of the five themes is supported by key priorities for action which will provide the focus for our service delivery for the period to March 2010 and which are detailed below:

One Tower Hamlets

Priority 1.1: Reduce inequalities and foster strong community cohesion

We are committed to **reducing inequalities, fostering strong community cohesion, providing inclusive services and strong community leadership**. These objectives are reflected in all of the themes of the Strategic Plan.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

1. Produce new Equality Schemes in relation to age, race, sexual orientation and religion/belief to complement existing gender and disability Equality Schemes
2. Develop the Council's community leadership role to deliver the communities in control agenda, ensure a vibrant local democracy and strengthen civic participation

Priority 1.2: Work efficiently and effectively as One Council

Underpinning the Council's leading role in delivering against our priorities is our commitment to work efficiently and effectively by **ensuring value for money across the Council; by recruiting, supporting and developing an effective workforce** reflective of the Tower Hamlets' community and by **providing effective and joined up corporate services**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

3. Achieve a reduction in the Council's reliance on Agency staff
4. Develop the Workforce Plan and implement the Workforce to Reflect the Community Year 1 Action Plan
5. Deliver the Efficiency Programme
6. Develop an asset and capital management strategy to enable the Council's assets to be utilised in the most effective way
7. Deliver the Local Priorities Programme
8. Conclude and implement the Channel Strategy to ensure that customer enquiries can be resolved at their first point of contact through the channel of their choice
9. Conclude the Council's information management strategy so that the full potential of the council's IT infrastructure is leveraged to deliver service improvements and financial efficiencies
10. Implement the stage 1 recommendations of the review of Financial Management Arrangements so that financial management information is improved and we exceed our targets for the timely payment of suppliers
11. Complete the Human Resources Improvement Project and implement its recommendations so that the organisation is more effectively supported at a lower cost
12. Continue to robustly manage performance across the Council, especially with regard to the Local Area Agreement, and lead preparations for the Comprehensive Area Assessment

These actions will enable us to:

- Build resilience to violent extremism
- Increase residents' overall satisfaction with the local area
- Increase the proportion of people from different backgrounds who think people get on well together in their local areas

A Great Place to Live

Priority 2.1: Provide affordable housing and develop strong neighbourhoods

The Council's key agreed priority for this year is **reducing over-crowding**

We remain committed to providing high quality housing in line with the needs of our community. Key objectives for the Partnership are to **increase the supply to affordable housing, especially for families** alongside continuing to **improve housing management**. We also remain focused on **improving the quality of streets and neighbourhoods**. A key element of this is **making sure that neighbourhoods have the right range of facilities, like schools and healthcare**.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

13. Deliver a programme of acquisition and new build to reduce overcrowding

14. Strengthen RSL partnership working to i) Secure private and public investment to deliver a supply of new affordable housing and ii) improve standard and quality of housing management

15. Achieve improvements in the quality of housing management through Tower Hamlets Homes and unlock resources to deliver the Decent Homes

16. Reshape major estate renewal projects with key partners

17. Engage in the Olympic Legacy Masterplan process to secure maximum benefits for Tower Hamlets

18. Finalise the Local Development Core Strategy Framework to drive the sustainable development of the Borough

Priority 2.2: Strengthen and connect communities

This priority includes a range of elements. We will connect communities by **improving public transport networks and enabling more residents to walk and cycle safely**. We have agreed to invest energy in **bringing communities together to foster understanding, wellbeing and avoid people being isolated**. Supporting strong communities also requires us to **ensure communities have good access to a full range of facilities - including health services, schools and leisure**.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

19. Implement the Sustainable Transport Strategy to improve the connections between communities
20. Use the Olympic and Paralympic Games to engage communities in cultural, sporting and celebratory events
21. Develop and implement the Victoria Park Master Plan to improve the quality, safety and usability of the Park and restore the heritage landscape
22. Develop the Olympic Games Live Site proposition for Victoria Park so that local residents have a free to access Games time venue
23. Improve the management and regulatory framework governing events in parks
24. Develop a Playing Pitch Strategy
25. Deliver a Baishakhi Mela in Banglatown Brick Lane and develop a community management infrastructure to take it forward
26. Deliver a range of cultural improvements to the Bishops Square Cultural Trail
27. Utilise the Local Strategic Partnership to provide more efficient and localised services
28. Deliver a programme of improvements to the local history and archive service

Priority 2.3: Support vibrant town centres and a cleaner, safer public realm

The Council's key agreed priority for this year is to **improve cleanliness and quality of the public realm**

Developing vibrant town centres involves **providing first-class and well managed centres where people come together for business, shopping, leisure and recreation**. Improving the public realm means that we prioritise **supporting and improving open spaces**. Another key objective is to **improve street lighting and reduce graffiti and litter**.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

29. Develop and implement the Waste Strategy and the Partnership Public Realm Improvement Strategy to deliver a measurably cleaner, safer and more sustainable environment
30. Deliver the Borough-wide Town Centre Strategy
31. Inclusion of the High Street 2012 Vision Study proposals as a key strategic programme within LDF
32. Design, develop and commence implementation of the High Street 2012 Historic Building Conservation Scheme including securing English Heritage funding.
33. Deliver the Local Implementation Plan to improve road safety

Priority 2.4: Improve the environment and tackle climate change

The Council will work in partnership to play a key role in leading the local response to environmental challenges and climate change. One key objective is to **reduce energy use and use more renewable energy sources**. We will also

use a range of methods aimed at changing behaviour to **focus on reusing wherever possible and recycle more**. Another objective involves leading work to **adapt our built environment to cope with the changing climate and weather patterns**.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

34. Implement the Carbon Management Plan to reduce carbon emissions generated by the Council
35. Improve recycling rates through targeted communications and better working with Social Landlords and other partners
36. In collaboration with the Environment Agency to complete the primary stages of programme development to deliver the priority actions arising from the Environment Agency's Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan.

By March 2011, these actions will enable us to:

- Support the supply of nearly 9,000 more new homes
- Support the supply of new affordable homes, including up to 1,400 social rented homes for families (three bedrooms or more)
- Increase the proportion of Council homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard by 12% and increase the proportion of Decent Homes that have been transferred to RSLs
- Reduce the level of CO₂ emissions that are produced in the borough by 10%
- Increase the proportion of waste that households recycle or compost to 32%
- Make our streets cleaner and reduce incidents of graffiti and fly tipping
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads in road traffic accidents by 15%

A Prosperous Community

Priority 3.1: Support lifelong learning opportunities for all

The Council's key agreed priority for this year is to **raise GCSE results to be the best in the country**

We want our community to enjoy life, feeling proud of where they live and what they have achieved. This means we are committed to **providing the best possible foundation for long term success**, supporting our children and young people to **acquire the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their full potential**, as well as providing an excellent range of learning, leisure, play and cultural opportunities that **everyone can learn basic and new skills at any age**.

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

37. Improve GCSE results to be the best in the country by implementing the priorities identified in the Children and Young People's Plan, with an emphasis on evidence-based intervention and personalised learning to support all pupils to maximise their potential

- 38. Rebuild or refurbish all of our secondary schools, through Building Schools for the Future, and upgrade our primary school estate through Primary Strategy for Change
- 39. Expand parental engagement and learning programmes in secondary schools so that parents and carers get involved in supporting their children's learning, and learn with them
- 40. Commission an additional 860 entry level English as a Second Language places
- 41. Deliver the refreshed Idea Store Strategy to ensure greater library usage, improvements in literacy and numeracy
- 42. Extend the range of positive activities and recorded and accredited outcomes available outside of school hours, ensuring all children and young people have access

Priority 3.2: Reduce worklessness

The Council's key agreed priority for this year is to **reduce levels of youth unemployment**

We aim to **help families escape poverty**. Reducing worklessness will also involve **the identification and removal of barriers to employment for target groups** as well as **ensuring there is support and training before and after they get a job**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

- 43. Implement the action plan within the Employment Strategy to ensure that Tower Hamlets residents access new and existing jobs and thereby reduce the numbers of people on out of work benefits
- 44. Develop and deliver our Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan
- 45. Increase employment opportunities for vulnerable people, in particular people with disabilities and mental health problems and those experiencing homelessness
- 46. 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

Priority 3.3: Foster enterprise

Our objective is to **provide incentives that encourage both business and social entrepreneurship**. In addition it is our intention to maximise the opportunities for local businesses to **benefit from key growth sectors, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games** and to reinforce these opportunities by **promoting Tower Hamlets businesses and encouraging growth and tourism, with particular emphasis on the Olympics and Paralympics**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

- 47. Refresh the Third Sector Strategy and Compact to ensure that we fully support these organisations

48. Develop an Enterprise Strategy which sets out our approach to fostering business and entrepreneurship.

49. Market Tower Hamlets as the key visitor destination for the Olympic Games and support venues and other suppliers to capitalise on this

By March 2011, these actions will enable us to:

- Increase the proportion of local people in employment by 2.5% to 55.7% - around 4000 additional people into work
- Reduce the proportion of local people on out of work benefits by 2% - a reduction of more than 2,500 people
- Increase the number of adults with learning difficulties in jobs
- Increase the number of adults, who are getting support from mental health services, in jobs
- Ensure the proportion of 19 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification (GCSE, Intermediate GNVQ, BTEC First Diploma, NVQ 2), rises by 14% to 72%
- Ensure the proportion of 19 year olds with a level 3 (Intermediate GNVQ, 4 GCSEs) qualification rises by 9% to 46%
- Increase the proportion of young people achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics
- Reduce the proportion of 16-18 year olds who aren't in education, employment or training from 8.2% to 6%
- Increase the number of young people from families with low incomes going on to higher education
- Increase the number of young people participating in positive activities
- Take more than 1,000 children out of child poverty
- Increase the proportion of students completing entry level 1 ESOL courses by 8%
- Support an environment for a thriving third sector with an increased proportion of local voluntary and community organisations recognising this support

A Safe and Supportive Community

Priority 4.1: Empower older and vulnerable people and support families

Key elements which support this priority include the provision of responsive and appropriate services for adults which **promote independence, choice and control, security and community** and which **prevent and reduce homelessness** by helping more people into settled homes and employment. Also central to this priority is **the protection of children and vulnerable adults from harm and neglect** as well as continuing improvements to **support for children and young people with disabilities and their families.**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

50. Implement the Homelessness Strategy to further reduce the incidence of homelessness in the borough and improve support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness
51. Improve support and information for carers across the whole of the Tower Hamlets Partnership
52. Deliver the Transforming Social Care programme putting people who use services in control of their own care
53. Deliver fully integrated service provision across health and social care
54. Deliver fully integrated commissioning across health and social care
55. Further strengthen arrangements across the Council and the Partnership to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, harm and neglect
56. Deliver priority actions in the CYPP to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and feel safe and confident in their area
57. Deliver a range of targeted programmes of improvement to private sector housing stock that support vulnerable households to live independently, safely, securely and free from fuel poverty
58. Implement the actions in our Children and Young People's Plan to improve access to care for children with disabilities through a coordinated, multi-agency approach

Priority 4.2: Tackle and prevent crime

The Council's key agreed priority for this year is **tackling anti-social behaviour and crime**

Objectives which underpin this priority include both a **reduction of crime and a reduction in the fear of crime**. Prevention is also a key element of this priority and is reflected in our commitment to **reduce re-offending with all who become involved with the criminal justice system** – an objective that is complimented by the Council's intention to **make crime prevention a key element of all service planning**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

59. Further develop more community-oriented and localised services and integrate new models of enforcement to improve public confidence in the Council and Police response to anti-social behaviour and crime
60. Develop our Reducing Re-offending Programme
61. Improve the provision of positive diversionary activities, restorative justice and information, advice and guidance to reduce youth offending
62. Develop a drug intervention and enforcement strategy

Priority 4.3: Focus on early intervention

Objectives associated with early intervention include a focus **on improving parental engagement and support** as well as the use of **joined-up approaches to address links between health, drugs, alcohol, education, skills, employment, accommodation, mental health, debt and benefits across all age groups**. There is also a commitment under this priority to **tackle the causes of crime by working with 'at-risk' groups, to nip problems in the bud**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

63. Improve access to preventative services for vulnerable adults, reducing use of institutional care and reliance on care managed services

64. Deliver the priority actions identified in our CYPP to support parents and families to provide a safe environment where children and young people thrive and achieve their full potential, with a continued focus on early intervention by putting *families at risk* at the centre of service planning and delivery

65. Develop Children's Centres to increase the engagement of families with children under the age of three so that more families are involved in activities that support their child's development

By March 2011, these actions will enable us to:

- Reduce the number of serious violent and acquisitive crimes in the borough
- Reduce the proportion of local people who think drug use or drug dealing is a problem by 8%
- Increase the number of residents who believe that the Police and council are dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour
- Cut reoffending by adults under probation supervision and reoffending by young people
- Reduce the rate of arson
- Increase the proportion of carers who are receiving a specific carer's service, or advice and information by 15%
- Increase the number of drug users in effective treatment
- Prevent more than 2,100 households becoming homeless

A Healthy Community

Priority 5.1: Reduce differences in people's health and promote healthy lifestyles

The Tower Hamlets Partnership is committed to four key objectives which support this priority. These include: **reducing the use of tobacco; reducing rates of diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol; slowing down the increase in obesity and improving sexual health**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

66. Strengthen the community leadership role of health scrutiny to tackle local health inequalities

67. Implement the Leisure Centre Strategy to increase leisure centre use and promote healthy lifestyle activities

68. Deliver a targeted programme to increase the number of people taking regular physical activity

69. Agree Olympic sports engagement programme for local residents

70. Implement an innovative new project, ASPIRE, which targets the most vulnerable young women, at risk of becoming pregnant, with individual support

71. Support children and families with identified weight management needs to manage their weight

Priority 5.2: Support mental health services to improve mental health

The objectives laid out in the Community Plan that support this priority include **the provision of high-quality accessible services** as well as **integrated planning and treatment for patients with multiple health needs**. These objectives are complimented by a strong commitment to **combat discrimination against individuals and groups with mental health problems**

Detailed below are the actions that the Council will take to deliver these objectives:

72. Develop safe and seamless mental health services that empower users and promote recovery and citizenship

73. Increase engagement with mental health services by under represented groups

By March 2011, these actions will enable us to:

- Further reduce the proportion of under 18s getting pregnant
- Slow down the increase in childhood obesity – to ensure that less than a quarter of primary age children are obese
- Increase adult participation in sport
- Increase life expectancy

How do I contribute to the Strategic Plan?

This booklet summarises the priorities, key objectives and activities set out in the Council's Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is the Council's core planning document, and feeds into service and team plans, right through to individual targets for staff.

This is a two-way process, with staff views feeding back up to help shape future plans. In this way, the work of every member of staff helps the Council to achieve the aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

The diagram below shows the links between these plans.

