

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22 February, 2018 – Questions to be raised at 27 February, 2018 Cabinet

Item 5.3 Determination of School admission arrangements for 2019/20	Responses
<p>Questions</p> <p>1. Is there a definition of teaching and ancillary staff to clarify that this extends to anyone with an employment contract for that specified school? And</p>	<p>The staff criterion covers teaching staff, teaching assistants, non-classroom based support staff /ancillary staff who have a contract of employment with the school they are applying for; and meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or• the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.• Catchment areas do not change annually, but alterations may be proposed in future to reflect the changes in projections on capacity requirements as a result of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• new housing developments• new roads• new or expanded schools,• the reduction in size, closure or amalgamation of existing schools.• In any proposal to change (move) catchment area boundaries the aim would be to:• Create a pattern in pupil admissions that ensures a more even distribution across the available school place provision;• Use of geographical boundaries/obstacles as area boundaries to allow for safe walking journeys;

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<p>2. Clarification on modifications to primary catchment areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. What triggers the change to catchment areas?b. How are boundaries moved / determined?c. How changes are finally determined?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the necessity for families who do not get a place at their preferred schools to have to attend school more than the statutory distance (two miles) from their home. <p>There would be a full public consultation and cabinet report, as part of the annual school admissions consultation, before any proposed changes to school catchment areas were enacted.</p>
Item 5.9 – Corporate monthly Budget Monitoring 2017/18 (Mths 9/Q3)	
<p>Page 345 – Appendix 2.3 Health, Adults & Community Safety</p> <p>Question What is the reason for the £0.4m underspend in Substance Misuse Services?</p>	<p>The majority of the underspend is occurring against the £600k budget allocated to residential rehabilitation services within the substance misuse services. This budget is used for spot purchase placements for drug / alcohol users who are not able to progress within community services. There has been decreasing use of this budget in recent years largely because almost all service users can be supported through community based services. The number of applications for residential rehabilitation funding this year has been abnormally low to date and therefore spend has been low. This has been investigated with Reset drug / alcohol treatment service and it is thought it may be due in part to the more complete offer now available from community services. However, we are continuing to look into this underspend in order to ensure there is no unmet need.</p>

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<p>Page 346 – Appendix 2.4 Place</p> <p>Question Please can we have an update on the costs for the Whitechapel Civic Centre?</p>	<p>NB: The latest estimated cost of the Civic Centre is £105m</p>
<p>Page 357 – Establishment of a Housing Community Benefit Society.</p> <p>Question Is a HCBS likely to be used in 2018/9 due to a change policy?</p>	<p>The Council established Mulberry Housing Society as a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority following the Mayor's approval in February 2017 and the subsequent recruitment of three independent Board members. Mulberry HS is likely to work with the Council on acquisitions of affordable housing during 2018/19, subject to viability and positively concluding negotiations currently underway with developers.</p>
<p>Affordable Housing</p> <p>Question – Has the £190m in Affordable Housing been spent since it was last considered at Scrutiny in December?</p>	<p>Capital estimates totalling £119 million were adopted by the Mayor in November 2017 to finance the additional supply of Affordable Housing units. This was made up of three elements:</p> <p>Acquisition of a portfolio of surplus dwellings from Poplar HARCA - £19 million Acquisition of additional dwellings for use as temporary accommodation - £40 million Acquisition of Section 106 properties within the borough - £60 million</p>

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	<p><u>Poplar HARCA / Dwellings for use as Temporary Accommodation</u></p> <p>The additional approvals increased the total capital estimate by £59 million from the original £30 million that was adopted for the provision of temporary accommodation in January 2017. The revised budget for the acquisition of properties for use as temporary accommodation is therefore £89 million.</p> <p>To date, £54.6 million of expenditure has been incurred on the acquisition of properties from existing Council leaseholders and purchases from Poplar HARCA, meaning that £24.6 million of the additional capital estimate has therefore been spent.</p> <p>The Council has a further tranche of acquisitions from Poplar HARCA scheduled before the end of the financial year, and is waiting to be informed of the results of other bids that have recently been submitted for the purchase of units outside the borough.</p> <p><u>Section 106 properties</u></p> <p>This capital estimate was adopted to enable the Council to take advantage of opportunities to purchase new housing in the borough, built by developers as part of their planning obligations ('s106 properties'). To date the Council has submitted four bids but has yet to be informed whether these are successful. No expenditure has therefore been incurred against this capital estimate.</p>
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