

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Health and Wellbeing Board</b>  Tuesday 17 July 2018	
<b>Report of:</b> Will Tuckley, Chief Executive	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>The Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-2023</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Sharon Godman, Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

### Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of the work of the Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership, which was reinvigorated by Mayor John Biggs in January 2017. The Partnership brings together key stakeholders to improve services and outcomes for local residents. Recently it has been focused on strengthening relationships and developing a vision and priorities for the next five years. To progress this, the Partnership commissioned a robust evidence base and extensive community engagement.

Following this work, the Partnership has developed a Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-23 (**Appendix A**). This includes the key objective of tackling inequality by building a strong, inclusive and fair borough, as well as four areas of focus to help achieve this objective:

- a. A better deal for young people: aspiration, education and skills
- b. Good jobs and employment
- c. Strong, resilient and safe communities
- d. Better health and wellbeing.

The Council has already begun to incorporate the core priorities and overarching aim identified in the Tower Hamlets Plan into its refreshed Strategic Plan. However, the bulk of the delivery will be undertaken by the existing partnership thematic boards through a refresh of their work programme to demonstrate how they will deliver against the outcomes in the Plan.

### Recommendations:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Approve the Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-23 (Appendix A)
2. Agree the proposed framework of delivery

## **1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 In January 2017 Mayor John Biggs reinvigorated the Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership, recognising that joint working has always been at the heart of public sector working in Tower Hamlets. Partners recognised the importance of coming together around a shared vision for the borough. Based on an extensive evidence gathering process over the last year, this shared vision has now been articulated in a new Tower Hamlets Plan. This document sets out the commitments to be delivered jointly by all partners involved, as well as the proposed next steps of working within existing partnership structures to deliver against the objectives, themes and outcomes identified in the Plan.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the process of development so far, as well as some key recommendations to take the Plan forward.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Mayor in Cabinet can decline to approve the Plan and suggest further changes. This is not recommended as the Council and partners have done significant work to develop the proposed plan, which is also based on extensive engagement with the community more widely and a robust evidence base.

## **3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TOWER HAMLETS PLAN 2018-2023**

- 3.1 The Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership brings together key stakeholders to improve services and outcomes for local residents. In particular it aims to provide residents with opportunities to shape, influence and inform the development of the borough's main partnership plans, all of which seek to improve the way services are designed and delivered as well as achieving key outcomes.
- 3.2 In January 2017, Mayor John Biggs relaunched the Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership. Recognising the importance of partnership working locally, particularly in the face of a constantly shifting public sector landscape, the Mayor has been keen to revitalise the joint-working that has always been at the heart of the borough. With a range of challenges on the horizon locally, regionally and nationally, from Government cuts, welfare reform, rising demand for local services, our fast-growing population to Brexit, this level of partnership working is becoming even more vital going forward.
- 3.3 The Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership was therefore reconstituted, with a Partnership Executive Group (PEG) comprising of senior officers from the Council, the NHS, Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service, Queen Mary University, Tower Hamlets College, East London Business Alliance, Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, Canary Wharf Group, Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum and local school representatives. Each organisation was keen to reconfigure the partnership

particularly given the challenges ahead. Partners want to work together to identify creative and innovative new ways of delivering effective and efficient services and providing strategic leadership on complex, cross-cutting issues.

- 3.4 Last summer, they commissioned a range of evidence gathering projects to provide a robust evidence base for a new borough plan. This included:
- i. Extensive community engagement in the summer of 2017 to provide an initial basis for prioritising future Partnership activity and themes for the new Plan. This involved 25 community leader interviews and 33 community events, which consisted of 104 interviews. Alongside this, 14 public interviews in Ideas Stores, 16 public interviews in parks, 4 public interviews in markets, 5 focus groups and the reviews of 56 documents including research reports and strategies were undertaken
  - ii. A public sector spend analysis providing a high level 'count' of spend across the borough. This has helped to create better visibility and understanding of the total resource available in order to support discussions about how investment can be aligned and focused where it matters the most
  - iii. A 'State of the borough' profile, which entailed a comprehensive review of data about the borough, covering core themes such as: population; poverty; education; health; housing; the local economy; community safety and cohesion; and employment
  - iv. Engagement with key colleagues throughout November 2017 – this included the Partnership thematic boards, DLTs and CLT.
- 3.5 Following this, PEG was able to identify the key objective they hoped to achieve through a new Tower Hamlets Plan - **tackling inequality by building a strong, inclusive and fair borough** – as well as four areas of focus that they believe will enable them to deliver this objective –
- a. A better deal for young people: aspiration, education and skills
  - b. Good jobs and employment
  - c. Strong, resilient and safe communities
  - d. Better health and wellbeing
- 3.6 The Partnership continued conversations with wider partners, stakeholders and residents to further drill down and identify what needed to be done to take these priority areas and wider objective forward. This second phase of engagement involved:
- i. A Partnership Summit – held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018, the Summit attracted nearly 300 people living and working across the borough, from 160 different organisations. Stimulating discussions around the four areas of focus took place and led to a range of suggestions and ideas for the Partnership to take forward.
  - ii. Engagement with key forums and partners – following the Summit the Council ensured that key partners were engaged individually for

further comment on the proposed priority areas of the new borough plan. This included speaking to internal colleagues working directly on these areas, as well as wider community forums such as the Interfaith Forum, the Community LGBT Forum and the Citizens Advice Network.

- iii. An online survey was also conducted from 21<sup>st</sup> February to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 to provide an opportunity for those living and working in Tower Hamlets to provide further comment on the focus of the new Plan. This attracted approximately 100 respondents, most of whom were residents, working full-time and above 35 years old.
- iv. Six commissioned community researchers who utilised their networks and approach to community engagement and insight to talk to an additional 750 people across the borough between 24<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> March 2018. They covered specific communities and demographic groups identified in the Plan as target or under-represented groups, which has historically included younger professionals, Somali people, older BME women and others; grass-roots groups and communities with which they already have good links; and other groups and communities identified as missing or requiring more in-depth study.

3.7 This second phase of engagement reinforced much of what the Partnership had identified as key areas of focus and there appeared to be a resounding endorsement of the current direction of travel, though all participants were keen to see what the next steps would be.

3.8 A draft Tower Hamlets Plan has now been developed based on the evidence base and the conversations with residents, wider partners and stakeholders outlined above (**Appendix A**).

3.9 Arising from this work some broad strategic commitments have been made in this Plan for the Partnership Executive Group (PEG) to take forward directly. These include:

- Changing perceptions of Tower Hamlets through a high profile positive communications campaign about the borough
- Speaking with one voice on behalf of Tower Hamlets about issues that will affect the borough, such as Brexit, and speaking with one voice on behalf of local people
- Building the movement for change in Tower Hamlets by working with a wide range of local stakeholders to understand the direction we need to take together, and creating the space for others to make their contribution
- Joining up budgets and services
- Understanding the impact of Brexit
- Bridging the gap between local people and good local jobs
- Taking forward the ideas from the first Tower Hamlets Summit

#### **4. FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY**

4.1 While the PEG has been responsible for developing this new vision and Plan,

partners are aware of the continued work of other partnership and multi-agency fora and networks, some of which were traditionally part of the family of partnership boards and groups, and were directly responsible for the borough's community plan priorities. These currently include the Community Safety Partnership, the Children and Families Partnership Board, the Growth and Economic Development Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, as well as the various sub-groups and associated networks.

- 4.2 It is envisaged that the five key partnership thematic boards will use the evidence base developed for the Tower Hamlets Plan to ensure their current strategies and plans are aligned and able to demonstrate how they will improve outcomes for local people alongside the Tower Hamlets Plan.

Partnership thematic boards will also need to ensure that current governance structures are appropriately equipped to deliver against the priorities of the new Plan as well as encourage ways of ensuring there is inclusive engagement from the broadest range of stakeholders so that plans are informed and shaped accordingly. This may require a standardised approach, such as the following:

- 4.3 *A Thematic Partnership Executive Group*  
A small executive function where members are responsible for delivering the thematic partnership (borough-wide) strategy or plan e.g. health and wellbeing, by prioritising and allocating resources in order to deliver change and improvement across the system. The Chair is likely to be a Corporate Director with related portfolio responsibilities and would convene meetings up to six times a year.
- 4.4 *A Thematic Partnership Board*  
Chaired by the Cabinet Member with related portfolio responsibilities, the Board would meet up to four times a year and have responsibility for developing a borough-wide thematic partnership strategy or plan to improve specific outcomes. Members will consist of key stakeholders in the borough.
- 4.5 *A Summit or Conference*  
Chaired by the Cabinet Member, a summit or conference held either once or twice a year to shape, influence and inform priorities ensuring the widest possible engagement with residents, interested communities and organisations e.g. for children and young people, and which could be responsible for designing and delivering (with requisite support) an annual conference that seeks to determine how we ensure young people get a better deal that focusses on aspiration, education and skills.
- 4.6 *Support*  
Each board would have strategy, policy, intelligence and performance support from the central service who would work closely with Members and Corporate Directors to ensure a consistent approach. The intention would be to ensure administration is provided by the Business Support Service.

#### 4.7 *Sub – groups*

It may be necessary for each thematic partnership board to also review existing sub-groups to ensure they are focussed on delivering partnership priorities.

## 5. **THE COUNCIL'S CONTRIBUTION**

5.1 The Council has aligned the development of Strategic Plan with the emerging priorities of the new Tower Hamlets Plan and has used the same evidence base. The revised three priorities within the Strategic Plan are:

- i. People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities
- ii. A borough that our residents are proud to live in
- iii. A Council co-producing and delivering excellent services

5.2 These will be achieved by focussing on:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Tackling the underlying factors of poverty and inequalities
- Building strong and resilient communities where people are empowered to help themselves and support each other
- Achieving the best outcomes for the investment we make
- Having a strong customer focus

5.3 The above indicates a clear correlation between the four areas of focus identified in the Plan. This is further reflected in some of the key performance indicators developed to measure the priority outcomes, which could be utilised by the Partnership to measure progress on the four areas of focus. Further work on this is currently taking place.

## 6. **CONTRIBUTION BY OTHER PARTNERS**

6.1 While key partner organisations have been involved in the development of the new Tower Hamlets Plan through the PEG, wider discussions within individual organisations to identify how the new priority areas and overarching vision can be incorporated into their corporate strategies and overall work programmes has started to take place and their contributions are being incorporated into revisions of the plan.

6.2 We have also started work on engaging partner organisation leads on some of PEG's broad strategic commitments including a meeting of communication leads to discuss how we can develop a more positive profile of Tower Hamlets. It is recognised further work needs to be undertaken with partners to enable them to lead on some of these areas of work and this will be delivered through the on-going engagement work taking place.

## 7. **NEXT STEPS**

7.1 Based on the above considerations and recommendations, the following next steps are proposed:

<b>Action</b>	<b>By when</b>
Discuss draft plan with all partner organisations at their appropriate forums/meetings	End of June 2018
Finalise and agree the Tower Hamlets Plan at MAB	July 2018
Finalise and agree the Tower Hamlets Plan at PEG meeting	By early July 2018
Finalise and agree the Plan at Cabinet	27 July 2018
Discuss and agree actions for each priority area with Partnership thematic boards to be incorporated into the relevant Partnership action plans	October 2018
Launch Tower Hamlets Plan at the next Summit	October 2018 (TBC)

## 8. **OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.

v. Already have good links; and other groups and communities identified as missing or requiring more in-depth study.

## 9. **SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

9.1 The Tower Hamlets Plan contains a strategic objective to promote better health and well-being. There is a clear correlation between having clean, green open spaces and improved health and well-being. Therefore an outcome of the Plan is that people should live in a borough that is clean and green. Activities to ensure this will be developed by the relevant thematic partnership board.

## 10. **CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The Tower Hamlets Plan contains four themes, one includes 'strong, resilient and safe communities' and has a linked outcome that 'people feel safe and

live in a cohesive community.’ .

## **11. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 11.1 The cost associated with producing the Tower Hamlets Plan will be met from within existing resources.
- 11.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

## **12. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 The Deregulation Act 2015 has amended the Local Government Act 2000 to remove the requirement for local authorities to have sustainable community strategies. This follows upon the changes made by the Localism Act 2011, which removed the well-being power (i.e. the power to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Tower Hamlets) and replaced it with a general power of competence.
- 7.2 The Tower Hamlets Plan previously contained the Council’s sustainable community strategy. Accordingly, following the changes made by the Deregulation Act, one of the significant statutory supports for the Tower Hamlets Plan has been removed. This does not mean the Council cannot have a Plan, but if it is going to have one, the statutory basis must lie in securing the effective delivery of the Council’s statutory functions.
- 7.3 The Council’s policy framework lists “sustainable community strategy” and makes specific reference to section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000. As that section has been deleted by the Deregulation Act and there is no longer a requirement for a sustainable community strategy, the Plan no longer forms part of the policy framework. In the circumstances, there is a reasonable argument that adoption of the Plan is a matter for the Executive rather than full Council.
- 7.4 The Council is a best value authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Local Government Act 1999. Pursuant to section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The adoption of a plan in conjunction with the Council’s partners to secure effective delivery of the Council’s functions may be considered consistent with this duty. The duty is ongoing, however, and implementation of the various high level objectives will also need to comply with the duty.
- 7.5 The Council is required to consult for the purposes of deciding how to fulfil its best value duty. It must consult with representatives of council tax payer, business rates payers, persons likely to use services and persons appearing to have an interest in any area within which the Council carries out functions. The report indicates that this consultation has been carried out.

- 7.6 The Plan contains high-level objectives which cover a broad range of the Council's functions. In the absence of a detailed action plan, the objectives appear capable of being delivered within the Council's statutory functions. However, many of the objectives in the Plan involve express duties and are the subject of other Council or partnership strategies. It will be important to ensure that the setting and delivery of these objectives is in line with those duties and those strategies.
- 7.7 For example, a number of objectives in the draft Plan are concerned with the reduction of crime and disorder. The Council has a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent the following in Tower Hamlets: (a) crime and disorder (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and (c) re-offending. The Council has adopted a crime and disorder reduction strategy in conjunction with partner authorities to achieve this objective.
- 7.8 When preparing and adopting the Plan, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty). A proportionate level of equality analysis is required in order to discharge the duty.
- 7.9 Any consultation carried out for the purposes of preparing the Plan or assessing its impacts should comply with the following criteria: (1) it should be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; (2) the Council must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration and response; (3) adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and (4) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account. The duty to act fairly applies and this may require a greater deal of specificity when consulting people who are economically disadvantaged. It may require inviting and considering views about possible alternatives.

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## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A: The Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-23

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- Community engagement analysis

- Tower Hamlets Partnership Summit report summary
- Community Insights research report
- Online Survey report
- Borough Profile: [https://preview-lbtower.cloud.contensis.com/Preview/1/lgnl/community\\_and\\_living/borough\\_statistics/Borough\\_profile.aspx?securitytoken=EhLGf0DAQLegK3Poa6eDdpTt8erB4tbcidRq1c1uaekRwtv1Hy3h3k88Bi2DxMPT4qBbPu3gUnZ8FI6Xf8gDPRnJQdKriB%2fi](https://preview-lbtower.cloud.contensis.com/Preview/1/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Borough_profile.aspx?securitytoken=EhLGf0DAQLegK3Poa6eDdpTt8erB4tbcidRq1c1uaekRwtv1Hy3h3k88Bi2DxMPT4qBbPu3gUnZ8FI6Xf8gDPRnJQdKriB%2fi)

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