

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE TOWER HAMLETS TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT  
BOARD**

**HELD AT 6.07 P.M. ON MONDAY, 10 JUNE 2019**

**ROOM C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE  
CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Mayor John Biggs (Chair)	(Executive Mayor)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities)
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing)
Councillor James King	(Leader of the Conservative Group)
Councillor Andrew Wood	(External Representative - THBVIB)
Sir Steve Bullock	(Chief Executive)
Will Tuckley	

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Amina Ali	(Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing)
Councillor David Edgar	(Cabinet Member for Environment)
Councillor Danny Hassell	(Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People)

**Officers Present:**

Daniel Kerr	– (Strategy and Policy Manager)
Afazul Hoque	– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Dan Jones	– (Divisional Director, Public Realm)
Debbie Jones	– (Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Denise Radley	– (Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	– (Corporate Director, Place)
Warwick Tomsett	– (Joint Director, Integrated Commissioning)
Richard Baldwin	– (Divisional Director, Children's Social Care)
Antonella Burgio	– (Democratic Services)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME**

Apologies for absence were received from Board Members Councillor Blake, Kate Herbert and Sharon Godman.

The Chair then welcomed Councillor James King, who had been appointed to the Board in his capacity as Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

## **3. REVIEW OF MINUTES/ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2019 were agreed subject to some typographical corrections relating to the representational purpose of guest Councillors which attended the meeting.

### **VARY ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair agreed that the order of business may be varied. Accordingly the reports were discussed in the following item order: - 7, 6, 4 and 5.

## **4. CLEANER STREETS AND OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT**

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report and presentation. He set out the context of the transformation programme informing the Board that:

- Environmental matters were an area of growing interest locally, nationally and globally. Feedback from residents' surveys indicated that cleaner streets were a significant matter in the community. Initiatives had been undertaken to address residents' concerns and improve the local environment.
- A new waste strategy had been created and was now being implemented. Waste collection services were being brought in house. A graffiti - street art policy had been created which enabled graffiti to be differentiated from street art of which the latter contributed to the heritage characteristics of the borough.
- The approach sought to engage with social landlords around waste and environmental issues which affected living conditions in the borough. Also it encompassed learning from initiatives by other organisations and councils.

The Divisional Director for Public Realm then gave a presentation outlining how environmental priorities would be delivered in the context of priority outcomes for environmental improvements in the current strategic plan. He highlighted the spread of the services delivered, the context and principles underpinning the intended transformation of the waste service and for the delivery of cleaner and greener outcomes.

The following information was then provided in response to Members' questions:

- The return of waste services to the Council was on schedule. Good human resources data was helping to ensure that the transformation programme remained within the projected timescales.
- Outputs formed part of the strategic services plan and their delivery monitored via performance targets. Monthly and quarterly data were collected and reported to the Cabinet Member for Environment.
- An SWOT analysis had been completed before preparing the report and presentation. Information delivered via this analysis would inform how delivery should be monitored and what mechanisms should be in place to ensure consistency of service.

The Board made the following observations:

- The residents' survey suggested that the borough was becoming cleaner however it was necessary to ensure that waste and environmental services were responsive where necessary e.g. cleansing after markets and initiatives being implemented to improve behaviours. The Board was informed that there was a new Markets Manager and had rebalanced its recycling contract to better meet residents' needs and service targets.
- There were some practical difficulties around waste collection, particularly in areas where access was restricted. The Board was informed that the Council was working with developers to explore how residents could more easily recycle waste. However there were challenges around retrofitted measures and also at older developments, therefore the Council was looking to work with developers to create purpose-built recycling facilities. The Cabinet Member advised that, since there was growing awareness and interest in environmental issues, it was necessary to ensure that there was joined-up working with other areas of the Council and external stakeholders to ensure that targets could be delivered.
- Since 85% of properties in the borough were flats or apartments it was necessary to consider the nature of the relationship the Council required with landlords and RSLs to address waste issues. The Board was informed that the Council had good operational level relationships and there was frequent contact at strategic levels. An area of challenge remained around small landlords and transient populations. These expected the Council to remove black waste sacks from streets at all times without reference to bin collection days. To encourage behavioural change, education and enforcement would be required here on the basis of evidence-based data to appropriately target polluters.
- Houses in multiple occupation were a source of poor waste disposal and recycling behaviours. The Board was informed that there were positive and negative aspects of the clear-all policy. There was need for good communications to enable residents to put out their rubbish for collection at the appropriate times. A Member suggested that officers focus engagement and enforcement measures toward estate agents many of which put out waste without separating contents that could be recycled. By addressing this group HMOs could better be

reached. The Board was informed that Public Realm was working jointly with Planning and Licensing to better use enforcement to bring about behavioural changes.

- A Member noted that some other London councils used suction waste removal and suggested that officers explore how waste disposal can be built into developments.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the report and presentation and comment on the Cleaner Streets and Local Environment Improvement Programme be noted.
2. That the comments of the Board on how the Transformation and Improvement Board can best support the ongoing work of the Cleaner Streets and Local Environment Improvement Programme be noted.

## **5. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION - TOWER HAMLETS TOGETHER**

Councillor Amina Ali, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the item and set out the context of the health and social care integration plan. This plan aimed to enable service users to access joined up health and social care services when needed. The outcomes not only concerned care of service users but also the wider well-being of the individual. Councillor Ali highlighted that delivery was required not only in the context of individuals' needs but also that of structural changes to health and social care services and financial challenges.

The Joint Director of Integrated Commissioning then gave a presentation on the health and social care integration plan for the borough; outlining the context, the current arrangements and the proposed Tower Hamlets Together Integrated Plan which will deliver further transformation.

Arising from the presentation, the Board noted that:

- In 2020 Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) arrangements would change resulting in one CCG for East London.
- There was a £60M funding gap between the NHS and CCG in Tower Hamlets. The Board was informed that, in the context of this financial challenge, an integrated system known as 'Tower Hamlets Together' had been devised which was intended to address the challenges around use of resources, pooling and aligning budgets and governance around health and social care while retaining local decision-making.
- It was necessary that Tower Hamlets consider its present local JSNA in relation to other boroughs and assess if averaged below or above these in its provision. A key area was good communications between the NHS and the local authority. The Board was informed that Tower

Hamlets had broad relationships with other elements of the Tower Hamlets Partnership and at a London-wide level.

- There was a risk that the Tower Hamlets Together integrated structure might disempower the Health and Well-Being Board and create tension around governance. Additionally there was risk of diluting community outcomes because of the professionalisation of the Tower Hamlets Together framework. The Board was informed that the Council intended to ensure engagement was retained within the Tower Hamlets Together framework and work was being undertaken to establish how the future Tower Hamlets Together structure would fit in with other existing bodies. Other authorities around the country were looking at how decision-making bodies might bring decision-making together in the form of a joint board with delegates from the participating health and well-being points.

The following information was then provided in response to Members' questions:

- Officers had sought to mitigate the funding gap by assessing how the Council used community related resources and then to reshape what resources were spent on and/or reduced duplication.
- Borough services would be safeguarded because the integrated scheme would support more embedded and sustainable partnerships.
- The integrated arrangements would permit the overarching East London CCG to establish different plans with each of the seven boroughs within each borough partnership. However, at present, the NHS wished to explore how to achieve consistency and how boroughs could work together.
- To mitigate potential negative impacts or a risk of failure of the integration plan it was necessary to balance the scheme to ensure that adequate local discretion had been factored to meet local needs and to efficiently provide specialist needs. Councils would need to ensure these were incorporated in their plans for service provision.
- Concerning whether integrating budgets would produce a more responsive service the Board was informed that the key factors were around pooling resources, improved outcomes or reducing costs and the tension between these. At present, evidence was towards improved outcomes rather than savings, none the less it would be beneficial to explore eliminating duplications.
- Concerning whether savings had been quantified and when further information around reducing duplication, identifying future efficiencies and achieving savings could be presented; the Board was informed that savings had already been delivered through joint working and integration. The Tower Hamlets Together plan would take forward initiatives that had been started, each savings proposal remaining with the NHS or the local authority respectively.

**RESOLVED**

- That the report and comment on the progress made to date and future opportunities regarding health and social care integration be noted.
- That the comments on how the Transformation and Improvement Board can best support the ongoing work of health and social care integration be noted.

**6. CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME, QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT (QUARTER 4- 2018/19)**

Councillor Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People introduced the report which informed the Board of progress in delivering the Children's Services improvement programme in response to the report published by Ofsted in April 2017. He highlighted the following achievements:

- Recruitment of newly qualified social workers was on target.
- Staff sickness rates between April and December 2018 had fallen.
- Restorative practice work continued to be embedded by supporting staff to use restorative techniques on a day-to-day basis.
- Priority areas of social worker training were management of cases where neglect was a key concern and understanding child poverty.
- The Authority had worked closely with Partners to improve health monitoring of looked after children. In April 2019 all children coming into care had received initial health assessments.
- Audits to inform improvement continued to take place.
- A learning and improvement review had been undertaken with other local authorities and recommendations from this were being considered.
- There was work to do around the corporate parenting.
- The Ofsted re-inspection was due to take place during the week. Areas of focus ahead of the re-inspection were to ensure that all case papers were up-to-date and accessible

The Board noted the progress reported and asked that the Service consider what experiences may be translated as good practice to other areas of the Council.

**RESOLVED**

- That the progress made in delivering the children services improvement programme be endorsed.
- That the next steps in the improvement journey which will be updated in the next report be agreed.

## 7. TOWER HAMLETS IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2022

The Strategy and Policy Manager introduced the report. He summarised how the programme had originated, and achievements to-date. The Board noted the following updates:

- Action 31 reported at appendix 1 (arising from the recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in 2018) was RAG rated 'red' since at the time of publication budgets for each budget manager had not been agreed.
- The Brexit Commission had now developed an action plan and toolkit. The Council was working closely with partners and residents in preparation for the potential impacts of the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union.
- Communications Team has launched campaigns to promote a positive image of the Council and internal initiatives such as 'Yammer' have been implemented to engage staff in improving organisational culture.
- A Local Community Fund has been launched and associated training delivered to enable community groups to access awards from this fund.
- The Strategy and Partnership Board has reviewed and streamlined Council strategy and policies.
- The Constitution review is progressing. Revisions are being consulted upon via the relevant consultees and General Purposes Committee. It was intended that a report would be taken to July Council.
- An HR Policy Development Group had been established to update and improve employment policies and procedures.
- IT improvements included network upgrade to improve productivity and deployment of Wi-Fi at Council locations in the borough.
- There had been improvements in relation to markets arrangements in the borough.
- The strengthening local democracy initiative was progressing. As part of this, scrutiny processes and procedures had been strengthened to better align them with strategic priorities and a Children and Education Scrutiny Sub Committee had been established.

The following information was then provided in response to Members' questions:

- The action plan would bring about organisational change through targeted coordination of individual measures which together would achieve this aim. Indicators of progress would be used to track progress and target core themes to ensure that resources were targeted to appropriate areas.
- The reorganisation of Scrutiny sub committees enabled this function to better align to the Authority's executive portfolios and provide better oversight of how the Council's arrangements deliver its priorities.
- TOWER values this year would be incorporated into PDRs. In this way they would be embedded into the organisation and demonstrate how its activities fulfilled the TOWER criteria.

- There was annual data on how the Council was meeting its equalities employment targets. Additionally the Equalities Board was looking into topical related matters.
- For technical and legal reasons, it had not been possible to deliver community Wi-Fi. However the Council was exploring whether Wi-Fi could be delivered to estates in the borough.
- No formal follow-up review had been directed following the LGA Peer Review in 2018; however the Chair of the Peer Review Group had provided feedback to senior management. Normally a follow-up review would be expected two years after the initial review.

The Board requested that:

- An update on work being done to explore the provision of Wi-Fi to estates be provided to the Chair.

**RESOLVED**

- That the progress of the Tower Hamlets Improvement Plan and comments of the Board be noted.
- That the action requested above be taken forward.

**Action by:** D. Kerr, Strategy and Policy Manager

**8. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 8.07 p.m.

Chair, Mayor John Biggs  
Tower Hamlets Transformation and Improvement Board