

Non-Executive Report of the: Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee 26 November 2019	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place	Classification: Unrestricted
Approach to Regeneration	

Originating Officer(s)	Sripriya Sudhakar, Head of Regeneration
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the strategic approach being taken to coordinate and deliver regeneration across the borough. It highlights the context driving regeneration as well as the area based approach currently being adopted by the council through the development of governance structures and delivery plans. The report is structured around the following headings:

- Context for regeneration
- Need for a co-ordinated regeneration approach
- Tower Hamlets approach to regeneration
- Regeneration Delivery Plan – Tool Box approach
- Governance
- Engagement
- Monitoring

Recommendations:

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the report and presentation and comment on the proposed approach for regeneration
2. Comment on how the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee can best support the ongoing work of the Regeneration Team and development of the regeneration proposals.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The co-ordination of regeneration within the borough is a key priority for Tower Hamlets, with significant challenges to harness the scale and pace of development and ensure that those living, working and visiting the borough benefit from the high levels of growth.
- 1.2 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee are asked to note the report and attached presentation which outlines activities currently being undertaken to provide a more coordinated approach to regeneration within the borough.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The alternative option is to do nothing. This alternative option is not recommended as it would miss opportunities to further improve the services and outcomes for residents.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

The context for regeneration:

- 3.1 The borough's new Local Plan has been developed over the last four years and outlines the anticipated change and growth in the borough over the next 15 years. With over 50% of the borough's footprint in designated Opportunity Areas (the focus for development within London), this change and growth is expected to be significant.
- 3.2 We have seen the population in the borough double in the past thirty years and it is predicted to rise by almost 100,000 by 2031. Around 55,000 homes are expected to be delivered in the same period. Job growth is also continuing at pace. There are already twice as many jobs in the borough as in 2000 and a further 44% increase (125,000 jobs) is forecast by 2031.
- 3.3 This change is taking place within a borough in which deprivation and inequality remain a serious concern. While relative poverty in Tower Hamlets has declined, deprivation remains widespread, particularly in the central and eastern parts. According to the Indices of Deprivation (2019), the borough also has the highest level pensioner poverty in England, and while rates of child poverty have decreased relative to the rest of England since 2015, the borough remains the 14th most deprived borough in that domain¹.
- 3.4 The health of people in Tower Hamlets is significantly worse than the London and England averages, with healthy life expectancy at birth

¹ The Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019).

being nearly 10 years less than the national average². Health inequalities also persist in the borough, with significant differences in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards.

- 3.5 Growth at this scale and pace brings with it opportunities to address these issues, but without careful management and co-ordination there are significant risks around the liveability of neighbourhoods, cohesion and inequality. It was with this balance in mind that the Local Plan seeks to ‘manage growth and share the benefits’.

The need for a co-ordinated regeneration approach:

- 3.6 The Council, through its various plans and strategies and its work with partners, already addresses these issues and delivers tangible benefits for local people. However, in the context of such significant change, it is now considered necessary for the Council to deliver a step-change in its approach in order to ensure that this growth makes Tower Hamlets a better place to live, benefits local people equally, and that any potential negative impacts are mitigated.
- 3.7 In June 2018, the Council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge designed to reflect on and inform the Council’s improvement journey. Two of the Peer Challenge recommendations were:
- Recommendation 2: Be forward looking and learn the lessons of the past but not be fettered by them; and
 - Recommendation 7: Reform the services that are still traditional and paternalistic.
- 3.8 In order to respond to these recommendations, the Transformation and Improvement Action Plan, overseen by the Mayor’s Transformation & Improvement Board (TIB), included an action to establish a Regeneration Board to deliver the council’s activity around regeneration and develop a coherent approach for regeneration across the borough.
- 3.9 The development of this co-ordinated approach was further shaped by the recommendations from the Planning Peer Review undertaken in July 2018 which included:
- Turning the Mayors’ priorities and the council’s regeneration and growth objectives into a clear vision ;
 - Taking a place-based approach to development and setting clear objectives and timetabled priorities; and
 - Ensuring strategic oversight of the borough’s growth and regeneration programme.

²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/bulletins/healthstatelifeexpectanciesuk/2015to2017>

- 3.10 The first Regeneration Board meeting was held in July 2018 and its focus was on establishing a vision for regeneration; a preferred approach to delivering regeneration activity, and setting terms of reference for the board. Over the subsequent Board meetings, the need was identified for a dedicated team to establish regeneration priorities for the borough and the resources needed to deliver them.
- 3.11 The development of a Regeneration Team, accountable for developing and coordinating a strategic approach for regeneration across the borough, formed a key action of the Strategic Plan 2019-2022:
- Priority 2 - A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in: Outcome 6 - People live in good quality affordable homes and well-designed Neighbourhoods: Action 4 - Develop and deliver a borough programme for regeneration.
- 3.12 In April 2019, an interim Regeneration Team was set up to establish a co-ordinated approach to regeneration. The team consists of five team members seconded from within the Council. Over the past six months the team has helped define and shape a Regeneration Delivery Plan in close collaboration with the Regeneration Board and various Council departments and wider stakeholders.

The Tower Hamlets approach to regeneration:

- 3.13 As part of Regeneration Board discussions since July 2019, it was agreed that
- the Borough's approach to regeneration should include economic, physical, sustainability, and social / cohesion dimensions;
 - the approach to regeneration should note and incorporate the importance of partnerships in delivering regeneration;
 - the new Local Plan already contains a regeneration ambition/vision. The development of a new vision was seen as unnecessary and that the vision in the Local Plan needed to be re-emphasised rather than revised; and
 - a more place based approach to regeneration and the four sub areas in the new Local Plan provides the spatial dimension for regeneration.

- 3.14 The Regeneration approach is driven by the Board's regeneration vision that reflects the vision in the new Local Plan (managing growth and sharing benefits):

"A strategic approach to regeneration will ensure Tower Hamlets embraces its role as a key focus for London's growth, making the best

use of the economic benefits provided by a thriving enterprise sector and improving connections between the borough and surrounding areas.

The benefits of transformation will be shared throughout our borough, amongst all residents, ensuring no one is left behind and everyone has access to the economic opportunities derived through growth. We will support our existing communities as well as welcome new residents to make their home within liveable, mixed, stable and cohesive neighbourhoods.

We will work hard to ensure our neighbourhoods are transformed with high quality buildings and well-designed spaces, while ensuring their distinct characters are protected and enhanced. They will contain a mix of housing types, served by a range of excellent facilities and infrastructure. They will be green, safe and accessible to all, promoting sustainable transport and making the best use of both our borough's heritage and natural resources such as parks and waterways.”

- 3.15 The approach to delivering this vision acknowledges that the borough is made up of a number of distinct neighbourhoods and places, which have their own identities, opportunities and challenges. In order to maintain an area-sensitive approach, the regeneration approach has been organised around the borough's 4 subareas as identified in the new Local Plan (Fig a). The focus of the regeneration of the borough is on three of these sub-areas, where it's projected the majority of projected growth will take place over the next 15 years; these are:

- City Fringe (including Whitechapel);
- Lower Lea Valley; and
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar.

There are also regeneration projects in the Central sub-area of the borough.

- 3.16 The approach also reflects the multifaceted nature of regeneration in Tower Hamlets which must encompass social regeneration as well as physical changes. Eight regeneration outcomes have been devised and are interlinked to the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan, Local Plan and the Mayor's Pledges, ensuring the alignment of regeneration activity to the existing strategic framework (as shown in Fig b) :

1. Infrastructure & place-making: New development that is designed to promote inclusivity and enhance quality of place, and is matched by timely delivery of social, transport and services infrastructure in order to support sustainable growth.
2. Reducing inequalities and enhancing wellbeing: Reducing health and other inequalities between people from different communities and different areas, and better air quality.

3. Making communities safer and more cohesive: Making communities safer and more cohesive through ensuring the accessibility of spaces, places and facilities; enabling community participation & strong relationships, and promoting culture and leisure opportunities.
4. Public realm & environment: The local environment is improved – Cleaner and more attractive streets, open and green spaces.
5. Affordable housing: More high quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of residents is provided.
6. Employment: More local people are in work and progressing to better paid employment.
7. Enterprise: Locally owned businesses and those that employ local people are starting, growing and staying in the borough.
8. Town centres & markets: Well-functioning town centres and markets provide existing and new residents with access to a range of local shops, services, leisure, cultural and community facilities that meet their needs.

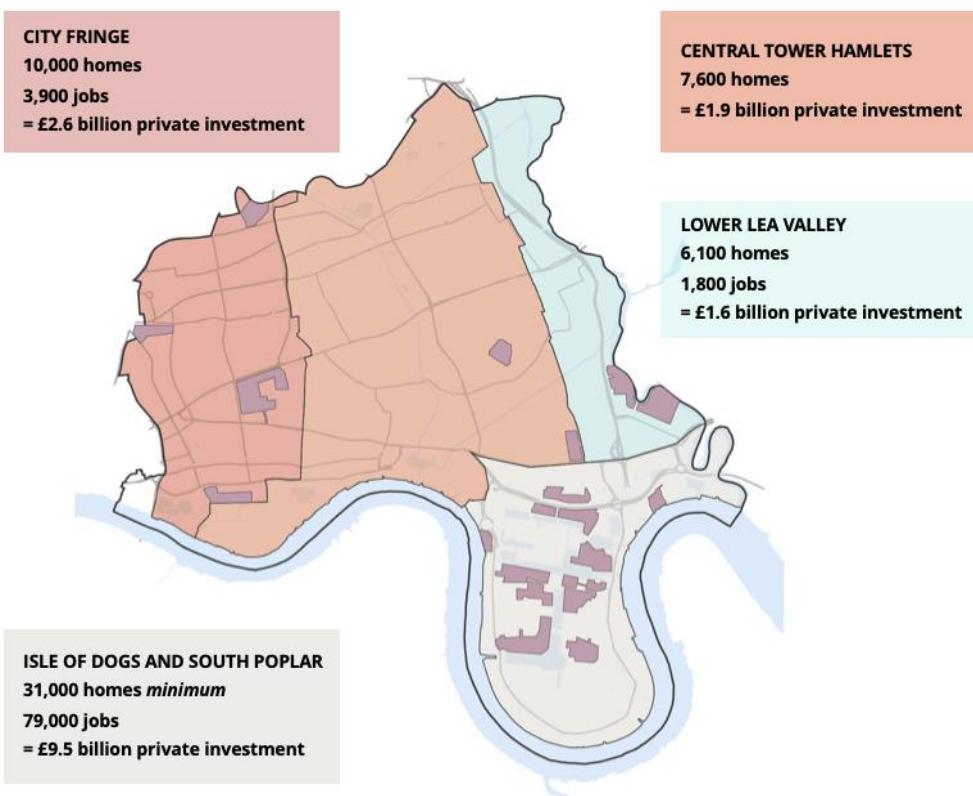


Fig a. Local Plan Sub Areas

6. REGENERATION DELIVERY PLAN

REGENERATION OUTCOMES

STRATEGIC PLAN

Priority 1: People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities:

- education, training, and employment 6 ; 7
- children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life 2 ; 3
- joined-up services, feel healthier, independent 1 ; 2 ; 3
- reduced inequality 2 ; 6

Priority 2: A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in:

- clean and green 1; 3 ; 4
- good quality affordable homes and well-designed neighbourhoods 1 ; 4 ; 5
- safety and tackled anti-social behavior 3
- being part of a cohesive and vibrant community 3 ; 8

Priority 3: A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough:

- open and transparent 2 ; 3
- work together across boundaries in a strong and effective partnership 2 ; 3
- Innovation and excellence to achieve sustainable improvement 1

Reducing Poverty and Inequality, Improving Health

Tackling The Housing Crises

Putting Young People at the Heart of What We Do

Cleaning Our Streets, Cleaning Up Our Air

Being on your side

Making Tower Hamlets Safer

LOCAL PLAN

Managing growth and shaping change: Growth must..

- 1 • ...contribute positively to existing identified social, economic and environmental needs. 4 ; 5 ; 6 ; 7 ; 8

2 ..be delivered alongside social and transport infrastructure, recognizing that without provision of adequate infrastructure growth cannot be supported.

3 ..be balanced, containing a range of employment, retail and community facilities, alongside increasing residential development.

4 ..be well-designed and enhance the distinctiveness of our places, ensuring old and new are properly integrated.

5 ..respect, protect and enhance our environment and our health and well-being.

6 ..optimize the use of the best available technological innovations. 7

Spreading the benefits of growth: Growth must..

1 ..deliver social, economic and environmental net gains jointly and simultaneously and reduce inequalities, benefiting the lives of existing residents.

2 ..promote community cohesion, ensuring the accessibility of spaces, places and facilities.

3 ..enable community leadership and engagement.

4 ..bring an improved quality of life, health benefits and reduce health inequalities.

MAYOR'S PLEDGES

Fig b: Regeneration Outcomes

3.17 Finally, the approach acknowledges that regeneration is a council-wide activity, with many of the Council's services delivering activities which contribute to the 8 regeneration outcomes. Regeneration activity involves the whole Council going beyond 'business as usual' to work innovatively and across the Council and with partners to identify and deliver programmes of interventions for each area that respond to a robust analysis of the changes occurring in the area and how best to respond to them for the benefit of local people. Regeneration is delivered by the whole Council, and not by one single team.

Regeneration Delivery Plan: Tool Box Approach

- 3.18 In order to achieve these regeneration outcomes a series of interventions have been identified. This toolbox of interventions provides an indication of the types of intervention which are either currently being delivered or could be deployed by the Council in order to achieve the outcome.
- 3.19 These interventions have been placed on an incremental scale, ranging from low intervention to high intervention, representing a range from a do-minimum position, or those which are less 'interventionist' in terms of time and resourcing, through to those which involve a high level of intervention, which would generally involve more time or financial resource.
- 3.20 The Interventions Toolbox is outlined in Fig c.
- 3.21 Each of the 4 sub-areas has unique characteristics and challenges. Mapping and understanding existing issues and using the new Local Plan visions for each area helped to define priorities for each sub-area. This helped to consider how best the Council could intervene, over and above what is already planned in the area against each of the 8 outcomes.
- 3.22 For each of the 4 sub-areas, analysis was undertaken against each of the proposed interventions to identify where no intervention is required beyond the Council's 'business as usual' activities in order to achieve the outcome; where there is already sufficient regeneration activity being delivered by the Council to achieve the outcomes, and where additional activity is required in order to achieve the regeneration outcome. This additional activity will be captured as new regeneration activity and form part of that sub-area Regeneration Delivery Plan that could be delivered by the Regeneration Team or another team in the Council.
- 3.23 This analysis and the delivery plans have been informed by:
- the Local Plan and its supporting evidence base and engagement;
 - the capital programme, including section 106 and Community Infrastructure Fund funded projects and associated consultation;
 - projects and priorities identified by residents through the Local Infrastructure Fund consultation;
 - the Mayor's manifesto; and
 - internal consultation with teams across the council.

6. REGENERATION DELIVERY PLAN

INTERVENTIONS TOOLBOX

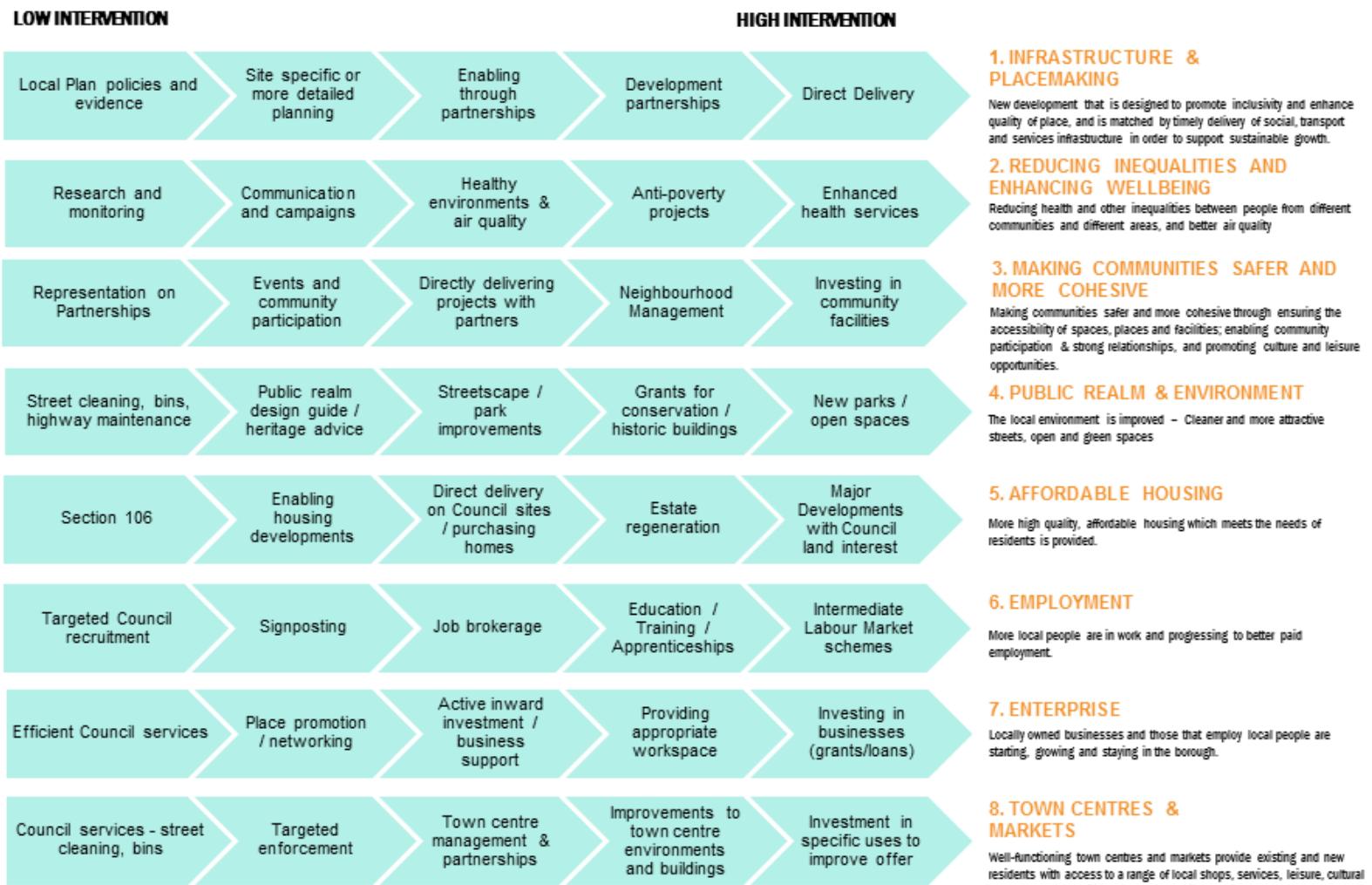


Fig C: Interventions Toolbox

- 3.24 An example of this area based additional regeneration activity is illustrated for Lower Lea Valley Area (PowerPoint presentation) that identifies a set of interventions across the eight outcomes informed by sections 3.25 and 3.26 above.
- 3.25 Area Delivery Plans will be live documents that will be updated regularly, ensuring that new opportunities, priorities and requirements are quickly identified and responded to. It is proposed that the Area Delivery Plans will be agreed by the Regeneration Board at the start of new financial year to inform the team plans, service plans and directorate plans as the projects span across the service areas.
- 3.26 Individual programmes and projects in the Area Delivery Plans will seek funding and approval through the usual Council governance procedures.

Governance:

- 3.27 The Regeneration Board is chaired by the Mayor and the membership is comprised of Council Officers and Members. The Area Boards are chaired either by the Mayor (The Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Area), a Cabinet Member (City Fringe and Lower Lea Valley Areas), or an officer (Central Area), and involve the Greater London Authority and Transport for London as key stakeholders.
- 3.28 The Regeneration Board is responsible for the development of the strategic approach to regeneration across the Borough, including oversight over delivery or programmes; steering a strategic approach to the securing of funds for regeneration and discussing strategic schemes coming forward (which have a significant area-wide impacts) to ensure a cohesive approach can be taken in relation to their impact on regeneration. The Area Boards serve as a platform for agreeing and overseeing work priorities and delivery programmes for each regeneration area.
- 3.29 The Regeneration and Area Boards are co-ordinating and advisory programme boards. Decision making remains through the Council's existing governance procedures.

Engagement

- 3.30 In line with the Council's Community Engagement Strategy 2018 – 2021 (CES), approved by Cabinet in January 2018 and reflecting the inclusive and co-ordinating approach to regeneration, the Regeneration Team will incorporate residents' views expressed in existing and ongoing consultation exercises, as well as undertaking engagement on individual programmes and projects as they are developed.
- 3.31 The emerging area regeneration delivery plans have been informed by the engagement undertaken on the Local Plan, the Local Infrastructure Fund and Liveable Streets programme. Area based workshops with ward members were planned in November but due to elections they will now take place in Jan

2020. The workshops will provide opportunity to discuss the proposed regeneration approach and receive feedback.

- 3.32 In order to raise awareness of the regeneration approach, the Regeneration Team have developed the ‘Approach to Regeneration in Tower Hamlets’ document (Appendix 2) which provides an introduction to the new approach to regeneration for residents and stakeholders. This will follow the adoption of the new local plan and inform how we deliver the vision in the new local plan- *managing growth and sharing benefits*.

Monitoring

- 3.33 Progress against the Area Delivery Plans will be monitored by the Area Boards and Regeneration Board. In addition to these boards, the Mayor’s Transformation Improvement Board will monitor progress against any agreed milestones. Furthermore, strategic projects/actions in the regeneration delivery plan will be monitored as part of Strategic Plan monitoring process.
- 3.34 In addition to monitoring the delivery of regeneration activity, the Regeneration Team will work with the Council’s Strategy, Policy and Performance directorate to monitor whether the delivery of the regeneration programme is achieving an improvement against the 8 Regeneration Outcomes. A range of existing and, where required, new indices will be brought together to measure the cumulative impact of additional regeneration activity.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Assessment of equalities impacts for these areas of work are being included into the approach and regeneration delivery plans as they develop. The Regeneration Delivery Plan and subsequent area plans also include themes focussed on how inequalities can be reduced, and cohesion promoted through regeneration being delivered in each of the regeneration areas.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Best Value Implications: Under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council must 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. Through establishing a new

regeneration function and approach the Council will improve the efficiency and co-ordination of how it achieves effective regeneration outcomes for residents.

- 5.3 Environmental (including air quality) and Crime Reduction: Three of the regeneration objectives (reducing inequalities and enhancing wellbeing, public realm & environment and making communities safer and more cohesive) will deliver projects which focus on improving the local environment and air quality and helping to reduce crime and increase community safety

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications emanating from this report which provides an overview of the strategic approach being taken to coordinate and deliver regeneration across the borough.
- 6.2 There are financial costs and funding decisions associated with specific regeneration schemes that form the regeneration programme but these are the subject of separate reports and approval processes.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

There are no specific legal issues arising at this stage.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- *Transformation and Improvement Board Work Programme, Terms of Reference & LGA Action Plan Tower Hamlets.*
Transformation and Improvement Board, 18th December 2018
- *Adoption of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031: Managing Growth and Sharing the Benefits.*
Cabinet, 27th November 2019

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Presentation Slides: Regeneration Outcomes (to follow)

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Officer contact details for documents:

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