

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

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

**HELD AT 6.00 P.M. ON MONDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2019**

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

**Members Present:**

Mayor John Biggs (Chair)	(Executive Mayor)
Sir Steve Bullock	(External Representative - THBVIB)
Sharon Godman	(Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)
Kate Herbert	(LGA Representative)
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing)
Councillor James King	
Councillor Andrew Wood	(Leader of the Conservative Group)

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Danny Hassell	(Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People)
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman	(Cabinet Member for Work and Economic Growth)

**Officers Present:**

Vicky Clark	(Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development)
Daniel Kerr	(Strategy and Policy Manager)
Christine McInnes	(Divisional Director, Education and Partnership, Children's)
Sripriya Sudhakar	(Place Shaping Team Leader, Place)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Corporate Director, Place)
David Knight	(Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Asma Begum (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities) and Councillor Rachel Blake (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Air Quality).

The Chair then welcomed Councillor James King, the Chair of the Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were received at the meeting.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June, 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

## 4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 4.1 Regeneration Approach

This report provides an overview of the strategic approach being taken to coordinate and deliver regeneration across the borough. It outlined why a coordinated approach to regeneration is paramount along with the contextual challenges faced in delivering on this. The main points of the discussions by the Board on this report may be summarised as follows:

The Committee

- Commented that transformation is not just about buildings/infrastructure, but for the local environment and communities more broadly;
- Indicated that transformation needs to reflect the vision of the Council and to show how the various programme will deliver the requires/desired outcomes;
- Noted that the Local Plan sets out how Tower Hamlets will grow and develop over the next 15 years. It outlines how and where homes, jobs, services and infrastructure will be delivered to meet future needs and the type of places and environments. However, whilst LBTH has the ability to finance local infrastructure projects e.g. the bridge over South Dock, its ability to influence through land ownership is finite as the majority of the land is in private hands;
- Noted LBTH must maintain a proper strategic oversight of the Borough's growth and regeneration programme and apply a consistent approach to secure its delivery. Therefore, it is essential that there is properly budgeted permanent project management team (funded via Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements) in place to support this process **e.g.** to maximise the benefits for residents within the available resources;

Accordingly the Transformation and Improvement Board **RESOLVED**:

1. To note approach for regeneration as detailed in the presentation.

## 4.2 Employment: Work and Greater Prosperity

The Board received a report that provided an overview of the approach taken to improve work and greater prosperity with Tower Hamlets. It covered the work areas of two lead members Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman, Cabinet Member for Work and Economic Growth and Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People. The focus of the report was on the work that has been done to specifically improve outcomes for young people. The main points of the discussions by the Board on this report may be summarised as follows:

The Committee noted that:

- Work is being done to giving young people and their family's exposure to other career paths;
- The Youth Service and partner agencies have an important role to encourage enterprise in the young and to help address the gender gap in attainment;
- There is work to be done on how to improve the transition for young people e.g. to develop the soft skills such as (i) interpersonal skills; (ii) communication skills; and (iii) problem solving skills to add young people;
- Work is required so that the Council and its partners can ensure they can support young people to (i) achieve their best educational and employment outcomes, (ii) ensure they are inspired; (iii) raise their aspirations; and (iv) help them develop the skills they need for the future;
- Whilst the Council supports all children and young people by beginning with a commitment to early help, LBTH also has to develop the groundwork for more specific focussed work in relation to the most vulnerable: those experiencing neglect, violence and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- With the new apprenticeship programmes there is now a stronger expectation that young people should (i) gain real-life experience; (ii) acquire new skills; and (iii) earn while they learn. Apprenticeships are also of benefit to white collar/graduate career paths as well as the more traditional role of blue collar work paths;
- The Council and its partners are there for families to help shape the employment programme/interventions and in terms of co-production so they have a better tool to get a positive outcome;
- The Council is using focus group's to ensure that all students get a good spread of opportunities and working with partners who can access other funding streams to ensure that students have a wider spread of opportunities; and
- Doing a lot in destination work for young people so they know where they should be.

Accordingly the Transformation & Improvement Board **RESOLVED** to note the report and presentation.

### 4.3 Tower Hamlets Improvement Plan

The report provided a progress update on the Tower Hamlets Improvement Plan which had been developed in response to the findings of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (June 2018) and captured the significant transformation and improvement activity currently undertaken in the Council. The main points of the discussions by the Board are outlined below:

The Committee noted that:

- The Partnership Executive Group (PEG) which formed a partner led Brexit Action Group has proposed to deliver the following themed actions from Brexit Commission Recommendations (i) **Tower Hamlets – You're Home** – A campaign to promote Tower Hamlet's and EU residents to feel safe and welcome whilst providing reassurance to businesses that the borough remains open and prime location for businesses; (ii) **Tower Hamlet's Got Talent** – A series of focussed sustainable actions for employers, education and skills based organisations to provide an develop the workforce for local and international businesses in borough; and (iii) **Tower Hamlets and European Culture Festival** – Celebration of EU cultural events commencing Autumn 2019 - Autumn 2020 recognising the Borough's position in Europe;
- London Councils is collating views from across London and LGA is signposting councils to relevant guidance and there is a Chief Executives Brexit Planning Group and the Resilience Forum so that boroughs can be prepared;
  - The Council's Local Community Fund (LCF) programme includes over 50 projects and expects it to deliver a range of activities against the five priority areas and outcomes of LCF. Monitoring and reporting arrangements for the LCF will also include providing updates to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Grants Determination Committee;
  - In Children's Social Care, (i) the vacancy gap has been further reduced from 26% to 19.55%. (ii) Service Level Agreements are being set for the Resourcing Team and social care managers to improve recruitment timescales; (iii) work continues with the development of the national social work apprenticeship scheme to be launched late 2019/20;
  - Following the full inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILAC) took place in June 2019. The result of this inspection had graded Tower Hamlets Children's Services as GOOD. In continuing to maintain the improvements LBTH has established and Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee to look at issues that can impact upon Children's Services;
  - In supporting the development of Councillors role at the scrutiny through a range of initiatives,(i) the Council's General Purpose Committee agreed with the findings to Strengthening Local Democracy which included actions to develop Overview and Scrutiny; (ii) Members and Co optees from the main scrutiny committee and its sub-

committees attended a joint workshop to discuss the work programme for 2019/20; (iii) an online presence was developed to capture residents' views on topics for OSC to consider; (iv) a scrutiny toolkit has been developed to support Members to perform their roles; (v) scrutiny leads continue with meeting with their equivalent Cabinet leads and senior officers to discuss areas of the portfolio. This will help improve the effectiveness of scrutiny and ensure that it is better aligned with the council's key strategic priorities;

- In addition to breaking down internal silos, the Council is also strengthening its collaboration and integration with key partners through the Partnership Executive Group (PEG). A summit had been held in June with over 100 members of the business community at Canary Wharf. It offered an opportunity for businesses to share their views on key issues and to help the partnership board to prioritise support for them. The Council has delivered its objectives hosting two partnerships summits (as identified in Tower Hamlets Plan, July 2018) on Children and Young People and Jobs and Skills; and
- Work is underway to strengthen the Council's financial discipline in terms of the delivery of savings targets and balanced budgets, with a focus on budget holders' accountability. LBTH has completed the first phase of the Outcome Based Budgeting project with the budget being analysed across strategic priorities but there remains scope for further refinement. Financial regulations have been updated and approved by the Council (July 2019), A new system upgrade (Agresso) will need lead time (2020) for implementation but this will be delivered through a tendering process.

As a result of discussions on this report the Transformation & Improvement Board **RESOLVED** to

1. Noted the progress of the Tower Hamlets Improvement Plan

## **5. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

The Board received and noted the following unrestricted urgent items which are summarised below:

The Board noted that:

- Improving Digital Connectivity within the Borough includes Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) having an understanding of the requirements and input. In some cases the thinking with THH has been to take a project-shared approach with fibre operators;
- The results of LBTH resident's surveys has seen a fall in confidence in certain areas as people feel that the Council is not as good as it could be. Whilst this is a trend across the public sector, it can be that the perceived situation by residents is not necessarily a close reflection of the actual position. Therefore, a lot of work needs to be done in this area given the improvements in waste management and children's services ;

- Scrutiny has indicated that it wishes to have representatives on the Boroughs various partnership boards;
- At the December meeting there will be an opportunity to review and reinvigorate the Board; and
- Board needs to consider how to prepare itself for the 2020 Corporate Peer Review.

**The meeting ended at 7.50 p.m.**

**Chair, Mayor John Biggs  
Tower Hamlets Transformation and Improvement Board**