

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**MINUTES OF THE CABINET****HELD AT 5.31 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2020****ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)****Members Present:**

Mayor John Biggs	
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing)
Councillor Rachel Blake	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Youth and Equalities)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	(Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit)
Councillor Danny Hassell	(Cabinet Member for Children and Schools)
Councillor Candida Ronald	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector)
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman	(Cabinet Member for Work and Economic Growth)
Councillor Mufeedah Bustin	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Social Inclusion
Councillor Asma Islam	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Environment
Councillor Eve McQuillan	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning
Councillor Dan Tomlinson	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Public Realm

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader of the Conservative Group)
Councillor James King	

Officers Present:

Kevin Bartle	(Interim Corporate Director, Resources)
Stephen Bramah	(Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)
Lucia Cerrada	(High Density Project Manager)
Andreas Christophorou	(Divisional Director, Communications)
David Courcoux	(Head of the Mayor's Office)
Michael Darby	(Head of Parking & Mobility Services)
Janet Fasan	(Divisional Director, Legal, Governance)
Sharon Godman	(Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)
Steven Heywood	(Planning Officer, Plan Making Team)
Afazul Hoque	(Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Dan Jones	(Divisional Director, Public Realm)
Adele Maher	(Strategic Planning Manager, Development and

Filuck Miah	Renewal) (Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Policy Team)
Ralph Million	(Senior Strategic Asset Manager, Place)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Corporate Director, Place)
James Thomas	(Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Matthew Mannion	(Head of Democratic Services, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 25 November 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

The **Mayor** made a number of announcements, including:

- The continuing menace of the Covid-19 pandemic. He highlighted how hard the Council, partners and the community had been working to keep everyone safe. Rising case numbers were noted and everyone in the borough was asked to help protect each other.
- The good news of the start of the vaccine roll-out was reported but everyone were reminded that this would take time and so care must still be taken not to spread the virus.
- The need to minimise contact over Christmas if possible despite the relaxation of the rules at that time.
- It had been a challenging year but he was very proud of the community in the East End who had worked together over this time. He wished everyone a good Chanukah, Christmas and New Year.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses were tabled in relation to the following agenda items:

- 6.2 Adoption of High Density Living Supplementary Planning Document.
- 6.3 Spitalfields Neighbourhood Plan – Validation of Submission.
- 6.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Determination of Outcome.

These were considered during discussion of the relevant items.

In addition, Councillor James King, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provided Cabinet with an update on their last meeting held earlier in the week. He reported on a number of issues and reports they had considered including:

- A Covid-19 update received from the Director of Public Health.
- A Spotlight session on Workpath and the challenges faced by that service.
- The Committee had considered an update on the Council's medium term financial planning and related issues.
- Finally, the Committee had agreed some changes to their procedure rules.

In addition, Councillor James King thanked the Mayor for his response to their call-in of the Housing Allocations policy.

The **Mayor** thanked him for his update.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Land at Malcolm and Mantus Road; disposal to Tower Hamlets Community Housing

The **Mayor** introduced the report proposing the disposal of land at Malcolm and Mantus Road to Tower Hamlets Community Housing on a long lease. This would unlock a site for housing development including a provision for affordable housing. He noted the appendix which contained confidential information relating to the financial matters in the arrangements.

He confirmed that there had been extensive discussions with the relevant housing associations and organisations. He noted the need to continue to work to ensure services to residents on the wider site continued to improve.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report and proposed the recommendations as set out. These were **agreed** without dissent and it was:

RESOLVED

1. To agree that the Land shown on the plan in Appendix 1 to the report, is surplus to the Council's requirements and approve disposal to Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH) on a long lease at a peppercorn rent, subject to a premium payment.
2. To agree the main terms of the transaction as summarised at paragraph 3.7 of the report and at exempt Appendix 2 to the report.
3. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place to agree minor variations to the terms and to agree any other terms necessary to conclude the agreement with THCH, including the grant of rights of access across the Council's retained land.
4. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place to agree the grant of licences to THCH to carry out any works associated with the development on the Council's retained land and for the temporary use of the Council's land to facilitate the construction of a development.
5. To authorise the Corporate Director of Place to agree to any minor variations to the boundaries of the Land to be sold, in order to implement the recommendations above.
6. To authorise the Corporate Director of Place in liaison with the Corporate Director of Governance to enter into the necessary legal agreements required to implement the recommendations above
7. To agree to consider the information at Appendix 2 to the report as exempt under the provisions of section 100A, and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.2 Adoption of the High Density Living Supplementary Planning Document

Councillor Eve McQuillan, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) – Lead on Planning, introduced the report presenting for agreement the Council's award winning new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on High Density Living. It looked at what made high density and tall buildings good places to live and what should be avoided in their development planning.

She noted that fire safety was not included in the SPD as those issues would be dealt with by fire experts and not the planning service. Fire safety would be considered as part of any design and planning process.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report to help ensure new developments were of good quality. He congratulated officers on the national recognition and award received for the new SPD. He noted the pre-decision scrutiny questions and officer responses including looking at issues around, for example, how aspects of living may change due to people modifying their work arrangements following the pandemic. He proposed the recommendations as set out and they are **agreed** without dissent. It was:

RESOLVED

1. To approve the High Density Living SPD (appendix 1) for adoption and authorise officers to prepare an adoption statement and publish the Regulation 18(4)(b) Statement and adoption statement so it can be considered a material planning consideration in the assessment of planning applications for high density and high-rise buildings.
2. To authorise the Corporate Director of Place to make any necessary factual or minor editing changes prior to publishing the final High Density Living SPD.
3. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment as set out in appendix 2 to the report.
4. To note the Representation schedule summarising representations received during the consultation and the responses to these representations as set out in appendix 3 to the report.

6.3 Spitalfields Neighbourhood Plan – Validation of Submission

Councillor Eve McQuillan, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) – Lead on Planning, introduced the report. This was a technical document confirming that the Council considered the Neighbourhood Plan submitted by the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Planning Forum met the requirements and that it should therefore go forward for formal examination. Should that be successful the Plan would then be presented to local residents in a referendum.

The **Mayor** and Cabinet Members welcomed the report and the also principle of Neighbourhood Plans. It was noted that it was important that those involved in creating these plans were inclusive to all the communities involved.

Councillor Peter Golds, Leader of the Conservative Group welcomed the proposals and supported the idea of having a number of other Neighbourhood Plans including in areas such as Bethnal Green.

The Mayor proposed the recommendations as set out which were **agreed** without dissent, and it was:

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Plan to be submitted for examination, on the basis that it is compliant with the necessary regulations under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) regulations 2012.
2. To authorise the Divisional Director of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion, to provide comments on behalf of the Council on the submission version of the neighbourhood plan during the Regulation 16 publicity period.
3. To agree that the Council should proceed to appoint an examiner of the neighbourhood plan with the consent of the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum.
4. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment considerations as set out in Paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of the report.

At the conclusion of this item the Mayor and Cabinet offered best wishes and thanks for all her work to Adele Maher (Strategic Planning Manager) who was leaving the Council after many years of service.

6.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Determination of Outcome

Councillor Dan Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) – Lead on Public Realm, introduced the report responding to a Local Government Ombudsman finding against the Council's actions in relation to how non-visible disabilities were dealt with in Parking space applications. He acknowledged the findings and reported that those with similar applications were being contacted to ask them to re-apply.

Will Tuckley, Chief Executive, and Dan Jones, Divisional Director, Public Realm addressed the meeting to apologise on behalf of the Council. The case was unfortunate, and the Council's actions had not been satisfactory. Training had now been provided to relevant officers and almost all the actions recommended by the Ombudsman had already been implemented.

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses were noted, with issues around the pressures on parking availability and the increasing applications for disabled parking spaces being particularly noted. The Mayor moved the recommendations as set out. These were **agreed** without dissent, and it was:

RESOLVED

1. To note the content of the report.
2. To note the actions being taken by Parking Services to remedy the situation.

6.5 2021-22 Budget Consultation Outcome

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the report setting out a summary of the responses to the annual budget consultation with local businesses and residents.

Whilst the consultation had had to change its methodology due to the inability to hold face-to-face interviews during the pandemic, it had received many responses and was able to highlight the main priorities for residents including public health, community safety, education and services for vulnerable people.

There was support for generating income from fees and charges and use of Council buildings. She noted the need to ensure in future that the papers were available more quickly for Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was explained that the report had been due to be published on 14 December after the consultation exercises had concluded which was too late to meet the publication deadlines for Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny. The **Mayor** accepted the reasons for urgency but stated that the timetable needed to be better planned next year.

The Council's proposed draft budget papers would be prepared taking account of the consultation exercise and presented to Cabinet on 6 January 2021.

The **Mayor** proposed the recommendation as set out. This was **agreed** without dissent, and it was:

RESOLVED

1. To note the outcome of the Council's 2021-22 budget consultation with business ratepayers, residents and other key stakeholders.

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Nil items.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

10.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil items.

12. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 6.48 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS