

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.31 P.M. ON MONDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2020

ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)

Members Present:

Councillor James King (Chair)	
Councillor Bex White (Vice-Chair)	– Scrutiny Lead for Children and Education
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	– Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety & Environment
Councillor Marc Francis	
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	– Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration
Councillor Denise Jones	
Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan	– Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults
Councillor Leema Qureshi	– Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance
Councillor Andrew Wood	

Co-opted Members Present:

Halima Islam	– Co-Optee
James Wilson	– Co-Optee

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Asma Islam	– (Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm)
Councillor Candida Ronald	– (Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector)

Officers Present:

Kevin Bartle	– (Interim Divisional Director of Finance, Procurement and Audit)
Dr Somen Banerjee	– (Director of Public Health)
Adam Boey	– (Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)
Afazul Hoque	– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Dan Jones	– (Divisional Director, Public Realm)
David Knight	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)
Christine McInnes	– (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships)

Neville Murton
Richard Williams

– (Corporate Director, Resources)
– (Business Manager Operational Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Denise Jones.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor Marc Francis declared a potential interest in relation to the Item 8 Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions due to his wife Councillor Rachel Blake being the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

3.1 Minutes from 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chair **Moved** and it was: -

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st September 2020 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

3.2 Minutes from 19 OCTOBER 2020

The Chair **Moved** and it was: -

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19th October 2020 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil items

5. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

The Committee noted that:

- The Mayor's decision in Cabinet to approve the proposed changes to the CHR Allocations Scheme had been Call-In; and
- The decision had been referred to the Mayor in Cabinet for reconsideration, including consideration of the alternative course of action with no amendments or additions.

7. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

7.1 Budget Monitor as at P5 for 2020/21

The Committee received a presentation from Councillor Candida Ronald (Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector); supported by Neville Murton (Corporate Director, Resources); and Kevin Bartle (Interim Divisional Director of Finance, Procurement and Audit) regarding the Council's projected outturn position against General Fund, Dedicated Schools Budget, Housing Revenue Account and earmarked reserves for 2020-21, based on forecasts as at 31st August 2020. The main points arising from the discussion are outlined as follows;

The Committee:

- A. Noted that with regard to future Government money that LBTH might receive and in particular regarding the Foregone earnings (i.e. the difference between earnings actually achieved and the earnings that could have been achieved).
- B. **Noted** that this was forecast as being £7m;
- C. **Noted** that LBTH had submitted a formal claim at the end of September;
- D. **Noted** that there were a couple points requiring clarification as to what LBTH could and could not claim for;
- E. **Noted** that it was considered LBTH would not receive the total amount being claimed and it was anticipated that the Council would have a short fall of potential £1m. However, LBTH will continue to keep this under review;
- F. **Noted** that the main reason for this is where the Government considers that the Council has made a conscious decision to not collect income. The best example of this being where a decision was made to provide free parking permits for essential workers and NHS staff. The Government considers this to be a local decision that the Council has made so it will not reimburse the income foregone;
- G. **Noted** that previously it had been assumed that LBTH would get that back as a legitimate loss of income due to Covid;
- H. **Noted** with regards to the social inequality that has been highlighted by the pandemic e.g. the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) where prior to the pandemic savings had been agreed. However, with a budget greatly reduced LBTH is still moving ahead with those savings.

- I. Therefore, **asked** if there has already been enough adjustment given the inequalities that has been highlighted as a result of the pandemic;
- J. **Noted** that the overspending in the DSG is something that has been discussed with the Department of Education (DfE) and LBTH is restricted to what it can do within the plan that has been agreed with the DfE;
- K. **Noted** that in terms of the social inequalities LBTH is considering about how to rebuild and recover after the pandemic. However, the Council does have a legal responsibility to set a balanced budget and with the risks LBTH currently faces in terms of the overspends and demographic pressures means that the Council does not have much room for manoeuvre in terms of identifying new areas of spend at the same time as protecting programmes to address inequality such as the Council Tax reduction scheme which we know will be really important to residents as the Borough rebuilds after the pandemic;
- L. **Asked** about (i) the loss of income due to Covid in this financial year; (ii) the extra expenditure as a result of Covid; and (iii) how those figures contrast with the financial support that has been received from the Government.
- M. In response **noted** that (a) the loss of income due to Covid in this financial year as referred to above was £7m from fees and charges; and (b) there has been a very significant sum from council tax/business rates that has not been received.
- N. **Noted** that this is more difficult to quantify because in the case of a business rates income a lot of businesses receive grants from the Government towards the business rates. Although there has been a significant fall in the amount of income received from business rates/ council taxes. Those people unable to pay their council tax due to their loss of income have applied for and been supported by the local council tax reduction scheme. Therefore, it was **noted** that the lost income and the additional cost of the local council tax reduction scheme is approximately £4m;
- O. **Noted** that officers would provide outside of the meeting details of the actual figure for the total loss of business rate and council tax income. (a) in terms of the increased additional expenditure the report sets out the total increased expenditure and the loss of income being £36m (£7m from lost income from sales fees and charges) and £28m of additional Covid related costs. (b) in terms of the financial support that has been received from the Government they have provided £23.6m in tranches 1 to 3 of general funding and on top of that tranche 4 has now been received which is the £14.4m referred to earlier. Therefore, at the time the report was prepared it was £23.6m but it is now approximately £38m and there are a few other specific earmarked funding for items like the Local Outbreak Fund and elements of the Business Rate Grants referred to above;
- P. **Asked** in relation to the (i) £12.5m overspend as highlighted in the Cabinet report; (ii) announcement last week from the Ministry of

Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) of an additional £14m to help the Council deal with the costs of Covid; and (iii) that there's a contribution coming in from reserves to reduce the shortfall.

- Q. In response **noted** that a £13m overspend has been identified of which £5.5m is attributable to what at that time was unfunded Covid costs. Therefore, the £14.4m that LBTH has now received would eliminate the £5.5m overspend in very broad terms. However, the Committee was referred back to the amount of sales fees and charges that cannot be recovered which indicated that there would have to be further options to address this although in very broad terms the £14.4m is not only for historical Covid costs but for future expenditures as well. Therefore, whilst it is really welcomed, and it is putting the Council in a better position than before where LBTH has been playing catch up and awaiting income to come retrospectively to fund expenditures. However, the Council now has some money in hand which will enable it to deal with the second wave of the pandemic and that there is the £7.5m which is not related to Covid and is still a component of the Council's base budget overspend and the £14.4m will not assist in that in any way. Accordingly, this will require further action to bring the budget back into line.
- R. **Noted** that the Secretary of State's statement had indicated that the money is to ensure that the Council has the resources it will need over the winter to address the impact of the pandemic's second wave. However, the pandemic has disrupted the savings programme and the two areas of risk to be considered are (i) not achieving our savings; and (ii) the demographic pressures that the Council are facing in this year. These pressures are very real and are to do with population growth and the levels of deprivation in LBTH and whilst the Council does not wish to withdraw support from the most vulnerable residents it has to work to bring the budget back into balance.
- S. **Commented** that this is money over and above what the Council might have been expected from the Government but still leaving a shortfall. Therefore, the deficit for this year is much smaller than was originally projected.
- T. **Noted** that the impact of the pandemic on Council Tax/Business Rates is not included in the report and is not yet clear. Also, the way that the Government has given LBTH more money makes it very hard to plan because how the sums of money are received. Then there will be another announcement and there will be another sum of money that does not relate to how much money that has already been received and it is very difficult to work with such uncertainty at the time of a pandemic.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Councillor Candida Ronald (Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector); Neville Murton (Corporate Director, Resources); and Kevin Bartle (Interim Divisional Director of Finance, Procurement and Audit) for their presentation

The Chair the **Moved** and it was:

RESOLVED that:

The Committee would require as part of the budget process in the next quarter a detailed breakdown of the:

- I. Covid costs;
- II. Recovery plans versus population vulnerability; and
- III. What costs will not be reimbursed by Central Government.

7.2 Waste Service Performance Update

The received a presentation from Councillor Asma Islam - Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm; Dan Jones - Divisional Director, Public Realm; and Richard Williams - Business Manager Operational Services that provided an update on the Waste Services Performance since the ending of the previous contract and the Service coming back in house and highlighted the challenges and successes since March, 2020. The main points arising from the discussion on the presentation are summarised below:

The Committee:

- A. **Asked** to what extent if at all does the Service consider the reduced amount of complaints about missed bin collections is down to Covid and what are the barriers that still remain between residents reporting missed collections and that being picked up?
- B. **Noted** that overall, one of the biggest advantages that the Service has now is that it can see more clearly details of complaints that could not be seen before. Therefore, the Service can now target complaints more effectively and has been very effective at resolving issues and is now seeing a reduction in overall number of complaints.
- C. **Noted** that the focus is now on tackling repeat complaints and complaints at crew level with a focus weekly on the reduction in complaints.
- D. **Noted** that the Service is now able to focus on complaints at ward; estate and crew level which was possible before and would like to share such data with councillors if they have particular concerns.
- E. **Noted** that the major impact of Covid for the Service has been where regular staff are absent due to illness and/or self-isolation.
- F. **Noted** that the **Service** put in some very early measures to be able to keep the crews safe and have continued to adapt. However, there has been a cost increase the biggest impact being where the Service has to bring in agency staff which has had an impact on completion of work because agency staff are not as familiar with the way LBTH undertakes waste collections.
- G. **Noted** that the Service is developing an Action Plan and Ward based Action Days to address issues that have been raised **e.g.** Whitechapel; Weavers; and St. Peters Wards where there have been high levels of

street cleansing complaints. The Service is looking at targeting hot spots to understand exactly the nature of the difficulties e.g. service design; people not understanding what they should do with their waste or that people are fly tipping.

- H. **Noted** the Service is looking at if better information is needed for residents and businesses and in some cases taking enforcement action e.g. the Service has been taken action over the last few weeks to target issues around illegal fly-tipping and they plan to continue with this targeted approach. As well as having a very focused look at cleansing standards and service design.
- I. **Noted** that the Service is currently experiencing an exceptionally high demand for bulk waste collections which has led to fly-tipping in some areas. However, the Service is (i) working to ensure that the three bulk waste collection teams are completing their 60 jobs/day; and (ii) maintaining an eye on the demand for bulk waste collections and to make it easier for people to book in advance.
- J. **Noted** issues in some wards regarding street cleansing where (i) the bags left by road sweepers are not being collected and are attracting fly-tipping so more work does needs to be done in that area; and (ii) roads not being swept often enough and that is a significant issue
- K. **Noted** That the Love Your Neighbourhood app which replaced the previous Find it, fix it, love it app, has a refreshed design and multiple new features.
- L. **Noted** this is a big area of focus as we have basically a frequency base cleansing operation at the moment and some streets are not being swept to the right standard and the Service is looking at addressing those issues.
- M. **Noted** that residents who have purple wheeled bins, do not need to use council issued plastic recycling sacks. Recycling can be placed into bins loose or in a clear carrier bag. Black sacks must not be used for these purposes. Residents can use cardboard boxes or 'bags for life' for storing recycling in their homes and emptying recycling into their communal purple bins – these boxes or bags can then be re-used.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Councillor Asma Islam - Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm; Dan Jones - Divisional Director, Public Realm; and Richard Williams - Business Manager Operational Services for their presentation

The Chair then Moved, and it was:

RESOLVED that:

The Committee in the next Waste Service Performance Update wanted to see details of service improvement with particular reference to:

- 1) Improvements in waste heading for reuse; street cleansing and bulk waste collections;
- 2) How it is now easier for people to report mis-collections through IT systems

- 3) How agency staff are used; and
- 4) Action plans for the West of the Borough e.g. Weavers; Spitalfields and Whitechapel.

7.3 COVID-19 Update 1:03:56

The Committee received a focused presentation from Dr Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health at Tower Hamlets Council that provided a comprehensive update on the current situation in the Borough with regard to food provision; the communications plan for vulnerable residents; planning for school outbreaks; the impact on social housing; as well as test and trace capabilities.. The main points arising from the discussion on the presentation are summarised below:

The Committee:

- **Noted** that Dr Somen Banerjee had agreed to attend on a regular basis to provide his expertise and latest information on the pandemic in the Borough
- **Noted** that comments were still awaited from the Executive with regard to the Review of the Borough's response to Covid-19. However, it was hoped that a reply would be received in the next few days and the response to the pandemic would continue to be monitored in the Committee's regular meetings.
- **Noted** with regard to food supply and Covid that the Government will need to have a sustained plan as the pandemic and its associated economic fallout has compounded and deepened the situation in a Borough with the highest level of child poverty in London. There is a real concern that that not enough work may have been done around food sovereignty during the pandemic especially for younger children. Therefore, consideration should be given to the funding received from central government and what the Council has considered to address food supply and the impact that this will have on budgets in the future.
- **Noted** a recent issue raised by a resident or being misinformed that illustrated that it has never been more important for the Council to communicate effectively with residents including effective signposting and sharing of the relevant Government's guidance.
- **Commented** that with regard the impact of the virus the Borough's Bangladeshi community it has been indicated that they are apparently disproportionately affected because by the virus and housing conditions in Tower Hamlets. In response it was **noted** that looking at the available data it does seem to illustrate that there are high levels of Covid in local Bangladeshi population and with higher levels in multi-generational housing and overcrowding which is linked to a risk of increased transmission of the coronavirus.
- **Noted** that the Director of Public Health has been working very closely with housing associations to link national data to local housing data so that we can see within each housing estate where there may be an increase in the levels of the virus. Therefore, through an ongoing

dialogue with housing associations giving practical advice (i) about the cleanliness of communal areas; and (ii) to those living in overcrowded households about how they make their homes safe. This is was an approach that initially linked to inequalities and ethnicity although there have been studies which indicate actually this is all about economic conditions; overcrowding and housing.

- Noted whilst there is no quantitative borough-wide data regarding self-isolating, Public Health have in their engagement work gained considerable insight into people's reluctance to get tested. They have concerns about (i) confidentiality around applying for test and trace; and (ii) the economic impact of self-isolation. This indicates that there is sufficient qualitative data to indicate that this is going to be a real issue within the Tower Hamlets' population.
- Noted that there's been a lot of work with schools through the pandemic and Public Health receive daily information about what's going on in schools and when there's a case Public Health England deal with these outbreaks they will contact the school and support decisions about self-isolating. However, Public Health England have been inundated with request for support so schools are now being asked to do more of a risk assessments themselves whilst public Health England will deal with the more complex cases.
- **Noted** the Department for Education (DfE) have provided 2,500 laptops and tablets to schools in the Borough to help children and families access remote education during coronavirus. The DfE are also helping disadvantaged children who need an internet connection to get internet access. This is in addition to the laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers that was distributed between May and July 2020 by DfE for disadvantaged pupils in year 10, care leavers and young people with a social worker.
- **Noted** that schools have been surveying pupils' own access to both laptops and the internet. Also, they have been providing support to pupils and many schools have purchased laptops for pupils. The Poplar HARCA Housing has been working with schools around the provision of IT equipment and therefore most pupils will have got access to some kind of IT equipment and failing this schools do make a packs of paper lessons and materials available to pupils if their isolating.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Dr Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health for his presentation and Christine McInnes –Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships for her contribution to the discussions at tonight's meeting.

7.4 Work Programme

The Committee received and considered the items proposed and agreed some slight changes to provide flexibility and focus for the scrutiny function overall.

The Committee **Authorised** the Chair to finalise the Work Programme, in consultation with the Officers, before being published and circulated to the Mayor; Cabinet, and senior officers.

8. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

The Committee **Authorised** the Chair to finalise the Scrutiny Questions following comments by the Committee, in consultation with the Officers, before their submission to the Mayor in Cabinet on the 28th October 2020 (See attached appendix).

9. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

Noted that a response had been received from the Mayor regarding the Committee's COVID-19 Review and recommendations. This would be shared with the Committee and arrange for this to be published with the minutes of tonight's meeting.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

As the agenda circulated contained no exempt/ confidential business and there was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public to allow for its consideration.

11. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

12. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

Nil items.

13. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL) CABINET PAPERS

Nil items.

14. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 7.51 p.m.

**Chair, Councillor James King
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**Pre-Decision
Scrutiny
Questions
for
Cabinet
28th October, 2020**

1. **ITEM 6.1 CHANGES TO RESIDENT PARKING PERMIT TERMS & CONDITIONS**
2. **ITEM 6.2 REVISED APPROACH TO IDEAS STORES & LIBRARY SERVICE**
3. **ITEM 6.3 REVISED APPROACH TO DAY SUPPORT IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE**
4. **ITEM 6.4 COMMUNITY CHARGING CONSULTATION - OUTCOME REPORT**
5. **ITEM 6.5 COVID-19 ADULT SOCIAL CARE WINTER PLAN**
6. **ITEM 6.6 LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY**
7. **ITEM 6.7 BUDGET MONITOR AS AT P5 FOR 2020/21**
8. **ITEM 6.8 BILLINGSGATE MARKET - UPDATE ON JOINT WORKING WITH THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION**

Item 6.1 Changes to Resident Parking Permit Terms & Conditions	
Questions	Response
1. Will the Corporate Director of Governance Services explain why Parking Services sought to implement these proposed changes as an operational decision rather than going through the “key decision” process and thereby being subject to the checks and balances of scrutiny and why was this not in the forward plan.	Following the presentation of a petition regarding changes made to Terms and Conditions to Parking Permits to Full Council on the 30 September, the Mayor committed to taking the decision to Cabinet. Given that residents were written to informing them of the change in July and August then it is deemed necessary to take this to Cabinet as soon as possible.
2. Can Parking Service explain why it is undertaking public consultation on changes to the boundaries of individual mini-zones (B1 & B2) but not for changes to the terms of conditions for all mini-zones in LBTH?	The public consultation on changes to the boundaries of individual mini-zones (B1 & B2) is part of a formal statutory process in order to change the Traffic Management Order. Terms & Conditions only require giving 28 days’ notice and are not part of a statutory process.
<p>6.1c - Appendix 3 FULL EA - Changes to Resident Parking Permit TC, item 6.1</p> <p>3. In 2011 the ethnic groups with the highest % of car/van ownership were of Bangladeshi origin 55%, 53% of children lived in a household with a car, the highest of any age group. The group of people most likely to own cars/vans were Bangladeshi homeowners 73%, 46% of people living in social housing had cars. 6,287 people whose day-to-day activities were limited a lot by health or disability issues had a car or van in 2011. What are those</p>	<p>The borough has one of the fastest growing populations nationally. An estimated population of the borough in 2019 was 324,745 and the Census 2011 shows borough’s population was 254,100. We did not include the 2011 data in the EA as they appear to be outdated. Apart from the Census, the council do not collect information with suggested details.</p> <p>The data from the Transport Strategy consultation resident phone survey data, which is included in the EA, show a higher proportion of “Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (45%) respondents own cars compared to the total respondents (37%).</p> <p>The 2021 Census (census date: 21 March 2021) will include questions on car ownership. The Census 2021 results will provide</p>

<p>numbers this year and why not in EA?</p>	<p>us with the most up to date data about car ownership.</p>																										
<p>6.1d</p> <p>4. Could the raw numbers of OOZ permit occupancy be provided with the percentages? 3%-25% of available parking space capacity being taken up permits from other mini zones is a large range</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">Total</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A2</td> <td style="text-align: right;">182</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11.10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A4</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1258</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A6</td> <td style="text-align: right;">502</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1900</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C1</td> <td style="text-align: right;">171</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25.73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">615</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11.85%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D1</td> <td style="text-align: right;">524</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10.64%</td> </tr> </table>			Total	A2	182	11.10%	A4	1258	5.19%	A6	502	8.09%	B3	1900	3.19%	C1	171	25.73%	C3	615	11.85%	D1	524	10.64%		
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<p>6.1e</p> <p>5. How have the buffer streets been chosen?</p>	<p>Prior to 1998 we had four zones A, B, C and D, a decision was taken to split these up into 16 mini zones, initially allowing just five streets in any one location in which visitors could park. However, this was found to be too convoluted and unmanageable and thus visitors were then allowed to park anywhere within that mini zone. The majority of buffer streets were decided on clean boundaries such as major roads through the borough. i.e. Commercial Rd, Vallance Rd, Bethnal Green Rd, Whitechapel Rd, Bow Rd etc.</p>																										

6.2 Revised approach to Ideas Stores & Library Service	
Questions	Response
1.What are the 'other practical concerns' referred to regarding the re-opening Cubitt Town Library?	<p>These relate primarily to managing the entrance and flow of visitors through the building in the context of the current situation. CTL does not usually have security on the entrance, as other sites do, and it can't accommodate a separate entrance and exit. We continue to keep our approach to managing these risks associated with Covid under review.</p> <p>We are still providing a higher than usual staff to visitor ratio at our open sites to manage service risks until our visitors get used to the new normal. This along with the fact that we have redeployed a number of staff to help with the pandemic, and allocated others to developing and improving our now vital on-line offer, means capacity to open CTL could be an issue for a while longer.</p>
2.What was the research indicating that 15 hours per week might be suitable as opening hours for the Bethnal	Bethnal Green Library is relatively close to Whitechapel Idea Store and the other option

<p>Green Library site?</p>	<p>in the paper involves closing this site. However, BGL is a much-loved presence in the community and the building is a real asset. Maintaining a small offer therefore for those less able to walk to Whitechapel (e.g. Those with small children) remains cost effective.</p> <p>Fifteen hours would allow us to open for one 'session' a day Monday - Friday. We know the library is normally busiest during the mornings with use by parents with young children and older people. However, opening hours (both the quantity and the timing) is one of the things we wish to consult on with the public.</p>
<p>3.It is noted that the Canary Wharf Idea Store, 'is not popular with all residents. Is there a breakdown of users of the Canary Wharf Idea Store which includes geographic and demographic data? If so, is the breakdown of geographic and demographic data available for the Cubitt Town Library?</p>	<p>The report says, "IS Canary Wharf, whilst not popular with all local residents is close by".</p> <p>An exercise in late 2018 was done to identify where visitors to each of our sites were drawn from. Cubitt Town Library's visitors were invariably drawn from a few streets in the immediate vicinity of the Library.</p> <p>A membership report of people with Isle of</p>

	<p>Dogs post codes show that, of the 2632 in the sample, 46% go to IS canary wharf 26% go to Cubitt Town Library and 16% use IS Chrisp Street which can be closer for those in the North of the Island.</p>
<p>4. Can I the Corporate Director of Governance and Corporate Director of Resources explain why the new savings identified in Items 6.2 and 6.3 do not fall under the policy and budget-making criteria that means they need to be made by Full Council?</p>	<p>The two listed reports include some savings that have been agreed at Council through the MTFs and some additional savings.</p> <p>At this stage the proposals in the reports to make those savings are for consultation and no decisions are being taken. Council will get an opportunity to consider the budget savings as part of the papers presented at the Budget Council meeting in February.</p>
<p>Appendix. 1 5 - the maps are misleading, LSOA boundaries are based on population size not on geographical boundaries & therefore should have equal population distributions but cover different size areas and therefore do not accurately reflect population density which is also distorted by dock space and large office centres. Can we have an accurate population density map?</p>	<p>The maps were developed to show the geographical spread of our sites and to provide a rough gauge of local population levels and are based on 2018 Mid-Year Estimate data at lower super output area (LSOA) level. It is always a challenge to accurately map population levels due to the nature of the information available.</p> <p>It would be possible, within a week, to</p>

	<p>produce a map that shows population density per 1 KM² or 100m however this is still potentially misleading. For example, if a particular area includes a green space and high density housing the result is likely to show as average population. It would be possible to produce a map that had this data, and which overlaid areas of green space so that this is more apparent.</p>
<p>6. When will plans be published for the future of Cubitt Town Library, the lost floorspace at Watney Market and any other plans for increasing non-Library use at Bethnal Green?</p>	<p>Officers in our Asset Management Team have been looking at options for these three sites. However, at this time, when no decision has been taken about the future of the sites, firm options have not been worked up. Firm options would be developed once we have an agreed direction of travel.</p>
<p>7 - Why is Watney IS store not going to be open in the afternoon and evenings if it's going to develop with a strong focus on children? 44% of users are under 16, but it sits near 3 secondary schools.</p>	<p>Our proposal is to open the site 30 hours per week. The example we have given broadly reflects how families have used the site in the past, but the opening hours and their schedule are one of the items we wish to consult on.</p>

6.3 Revised approach to day support in adult social care

Questions	Response
<p>1. Has there been any additional funding sought from government or charities for the creation of the Russia Lane Day Service dementia hub?</p>	<p>No. We are in the early stages of designing a new model of day support and the proposals are subject to consultation. Additional funding sources will be looked at as the work progresses.</p>
<p>2. What research has been undertaken to map the day support offer that community hubs will provide as specialist support for people with care and support needs?</p>	<p>We commissioned Toynbee Hall to carry out a coproduction exercise with service users from PD Day Opportunities, Riverside Day Service, Sundial Centre, Sonali Gardens and Russia Lane. Between July and September 2020, 114 older people and people with a physical disability who use day services, 26 carers, 18 stakeholders and 12-day service staff members were involved in this work. The work provides insight and research into what support offer people want and need from a day service.</p> <p>We have mapped day support and some of the daytime activities available in the borough, which is included in the report and appendices. We anticipate that some service users will want to access these where it meets their needs and interests. The activities available that could be 'brought into' buildings are extensive, reflective of the wide range of activities available in the borough.</p>
<p>3.If it is expected that there will be 'a bigger focus on supporting adult social care users to access daytime activities available to all residents, such as IDEA Stores or community hubs,' has there been any risk identified by Adult Social Care around the proposed closure of the IDEA Stores mentioned in a separate report to be taken at the same cabinet meeting (28.10.2020).</p>	<p>The report on the revised approach to day support in adult social care has been developed with an awareness of the report on the revised approach to Idea Store and library services. No risks have been identified by adult social care around the proposals in the report. This is because Idea Stores are one of a number of daytime activities in the borough and because we will not have a full picture of the daytime activities that service users want to</p>

	access until the consultation concludes.
4. If so, has the impact of the proposed three hour opening of the Bethnal Green Library been specially factored into the impact on service users of the Pritchard Road Day Centre?	No, for the reasons outlined in the last response.
5. What assurance can be made to service users that the supports, choice, control and transparency of alternative options will be made available ahead of the closure of day centres?	<p>We will provide information to service users on this ahead of centre closures.</p> <p>The consultation will be launched in November 2020. The information in the consultation describes some of the alternative options that we want views on as well as asking for views on what people want a future day support service to look like. The consultation 'pack' that describes this information will be sent to and discussed with all services users impacted by the proposals.</p> <p>In addition, staff in adult social care will continue to communicate with, engage and support all service users and carers impacted by the proposals over the coming months to ensure everyone is clear on the process, the proposals, the consultation and the potential outcome.</p>

<p>6. What assessment has been made of the impact on vulnerable adults/adults at risk due to the lack of services between 1st April 2021 and 1st January 2022?</p>	<p>We do not anticipate there being a lack of services between April 2021 and January 2022.</p> <p>Through the consultation and through carrying out reviews with individual service users, we will identify alternative support in line with people's needs and preferences.</p>
<p>7. Considering that the 'availability of a suitable building for the establishment of a day opportunities hub is being explored as part of the current asset strategy work' would it not be advisable to await the outcome of the asset strategy before making a decision so as not to impact service delivery.</p>	<p>The Asset Strategy is working document which identifies what buildings in the council's property portfolio are currently used for and their potential to meet the changing needs of service areas, identified through service reviews. A number of service areas across the authority are in the process of reviewing their asset requirements, which may result in existing assets becoming available for alternative use. Whilst the Asset Strategy sets out the position at a point in time, it is dynamic and seeks to find the right accommodation solution to support new ways of working and different service models, including the requirement for a day opportunities hub.</p>
<p>8. How many service users from Tower Projects were supported in completing the consultation?</p>	<p>No service users from Tower Project were supported in completing the consultation because the consultation has not started. We will be contacting all service users and carers impacted by the proposal as part of the consultation.</p>
<p>9. Toynbee Hall report notes as headline 16 that 'Information on day centres - can be limited.' Is there scope to support the communication of information around access to day centres so that Pritchard Road and others are better used.</p>	<p>Yes, there is scope to support the communication of information around access to day centres. We will include this in work to design the new day support model. The report also notes that it would be helpful to improve communication on things like direct payments, which we will include in the work.</p>

	<p>However, the reasons behind the proposal to close Pritchard's Road, Riverside Day Service and PD Day Opportunities are explained in the report and go beyond the extent to which information is provided about them.</p>
<p>10. Have insource options been reviewed alongside commission contracts for older people day support services?</p>	<p>No. The report looks at all day support provision, but the most significant changes relate to three in-house day centres: Pritchard's Road, PD Day Opportunities and Riverside. The report confirms we are not proposing changes to commissioned day services at this stage. However, we intend to make changes in future in line with the model being proposed here. These changes will be carried out in line with commissioning and procurement timescales and all options will be considered.</p>
<p>11. What are the defining characteristics of the proposed day centres model which you suggest you intend future changes to the commissioned day service will be made in line with.</p>	<p>Future commissioned day service support will be aligned to the aims set out in the report (please see Section 3.3).</p> <p>What this means in practice will be determined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The co-production work being finalised through Toynbee Hall • The results of the consultation in early 2021 • Analysis of need and the impact on equalities in early 2021 • The resources we have available.
<p>12. Has the net saving of £0.568m been reviewed against the possible increased demand of carers upon the Shared Lives and other programmes?</p>	<p>The report sets out that based on current assumptions, we expect to reinvest £0.452m resulting in a net saving of £0.568m. The reinvestment will be for alternative provision, which could therefore include an extension of the Shared Lives programme. However, this will not be clear until the consultation on what people want and need from future day support has been carried out.</p>

<p>13. Further to the above, how much of this proposed overall saving is seen as part of the community mental health transformation programme?</p>	<p>None of the proposed saving is seen as part of the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme.</p>
<p>14 - 3.2.1 Attendance: are the users who do attend, generally the same people each day or do different people come on different days? of the Active registered users how does usage breakdown?</p>	<p>Different people come on different days, though this will vary significantly from person to person (i.e. one person might attend for one day per week, another for two, another for five), hence the number of service users registered to attend each day service is typically higher than the capacity of each building.</p> <p>We can provide further information on the proportion of active registered users who attended one, two, three, four or five days per week on average over 2019-20 as part of the report that follows the consultation.</p>
<p>15 - Using day service buildings as community hubs - what is the geographic distribution of those hubs?</p>	<p>At present and excluding external learning disability day service provision, the location of day service provision is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pritchard's Road, Sundial Centre and Russia Lane Day Service are based in Bethnal Green - Riverside Day Service is based in the Isle of Dogs - PD Day Opportunities is based in Stepney - Sonali Gardens is based in Shadwell - Create is based near Whitechapel. <p>We won't know this until the consultation has been carried out and the options for a day support community hub have been explored and evaluated. However, the geographical distribution of the future model will be looked at to ensure fair and equitable access to services and support across the borough, and it is understood that the accessibility of venues is really important to service users and carers.</p>

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6.4 Community Charging Consultation – Outcome Report

Questions	Response
1. 263 people responding to the consultation – is there an Equality Breakdown of the 263 responders?	<p>The profile of respondents was broadly reflective of the profile of those in adult social care community-based services, as outlined in section 3.4 of the report. In terms of the breakdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 208 people provided their age, of which 52% were aged 65 or over.• 53% were female, 47% male• 43% were of a White ethnic background (38% White British), 38% were of an Asian ethnic background and 19% were of a Black or other ethnic background.• 45% were Muslim, 40% were Christian. The remainder were of no or a different religion or belief.• 91% identified as heterosexual, 1% bisexual, 1% day/lesbian, 1% preferred to self-describe.• All but four respondents said their gender identity is the same as the sex assigned to them at birth.• 38% were married and 58% were not married.• No respondents reported being pregnant or on maternity leave.
2. How many people were consulted on the Option 1 proposal added in May 2020.	<p>The consultation made up of options 1, 2 and 3 ran from June to September 2020. During this time, the postal survey sent to 2814 service users in community-based services was sent out and all the meetings with stakeholders detailed in the report took place.</p> <p>All but two people responded to the consultation made up of options 1, 2 and 3 (our capacity to promote the consultation when it originally launched in March was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic). Those two people were contacted to alert them to the</p>

	<p>relaunched consultation in June 2020 so that they could respond to the three options.</p>
<p>3. What is the extent and breakdown of the 'bigger impact on an estimated 28 people who have more disposable income'.</p>	<p>Excluding all other considerations, the estimated 28 people impacted by raising the current cap of £250 per week could experience an increase of between £1 and £750 per week towards their care costs with Option 2.</p> <p>However, the actual increase or change will vary significantly from individual to individual as the financial assessment is means-tested and individuals must be left with things like the Minimum Income Guarantee amount.</p>
<p>4. Why was Option 2 supported by only 15% of respondents favoured over Option 3 supported by 72% of respondents and which delivered slightly less savings?</p>	<p>Option 2 takes account of views expressed in the consultation alongside the impact of removing the Standard Utilities Allowance on people with comparatively less disposable income.</p> <p>The Equality Analysis identified that removing the Standard Utilities Allowance entirely (as per Option 3) will have a bigger impact on adult social care users who have less disposable income, and this has been reinforced in consultation responses. For this reason, Option 3 is not being recommended despite being supported by 72% of respondents.</p>

6.5 COVID-19 Adult Social Care Winter Plan

Questions	Response
1. Could the completed self-assessment of the health of local market management and contingency planning leading into winter be shared with councillors	Yes. The self-assessment is an online form that is not in a format to share, however the content can be shared.
2. What support has been made available via the winter plan for care homes to implement a routine staff and resident swab testing programme?	All our care homes are part of the national care homes testing scheme. This means weekly testing for staff and monthly testing for residents. We also access support from the GP Care Group to 'train up' carer workers in administering the tests.
3. How has the flexibility of Direct payments been communicated to service users?	This has been communicated through People Plus, who provide our direct payment support service. Information was published on the Council website and promoted through usual communication channels.
4. What engagement has there been regarding identification and proactive engagement with our highest risk settings to provide advice and support to adopt COVID secure measures?	A detailed programme of work is in place on this and we have full engagement with high risk settings in the borough (care homes, extra care sheltered housing and hostels for example). We provide training, information and advice on infection control. We have weekly meetings with commissioned providers to discuss and engage on this. We have also developed operating procedures to ensure robust measures are in place.
5. What work has been undertaken to identify how many people may need support with food whilst self-isolating. What is the estimated number of volunteers required to support food delivery per ward?	We do not know how many people may need support with food whilst self-isolating. This is because the number will constantly change and because we know that a number of people will get support through their own networks. We have instead worked with partners to create pathways so that anyone who needs support with food whilst self-isolating can get this if needed. Since the pandemic began, just under 6000 people have received support

	<p>with food from the local authority or community and voluntary sector.</p> <p>There are over 2,300 community volunteers registered with our Volunteer Hub who can and are called upon to support with food delivery. The actual number of active volunteers at any one time will vary depending on the situation.</p>
<p>• 6.5a - Appendix. 1 for COVID-19 Adult Social Care Winter Plan, item 6.5</p> <p>6. Page 5/12 Hospital discharge & care homes - have we identified yet a 'safe' care home to discharge COVID positive patients into? is that East Ham CH?</p>	<p>For people who need a care home and need to self-isolate, we are using beds that have been commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group on behalf of Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Newham. These are not necessarily care homes but are temporary placements whilst a person self-isolate. The main site is the East Ham Care Centre, which has a total of 23 beds.</p> <p>In addition, St. Joseph's Hospice has 23 beds for people who have tested positive for Covid-19 at the end of life.</p>
<p>• 6.5b - Appendix. 2 for COVID-19 Adult Social Care Winter Plan, item 6.5</p> <p>7. Page 18/24 Flu and cold weather - what are the current supply levels of flu vaccine due to reports of not being widely available for general public yet?</p>	<p>The local authority does not hold detailed information on the current supply level. However, we are working closely with our health partners (i.e. pharmacies and the Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group) to monitor the situation and so that any issues can be escalated.</p>

6 .6 London Borough of Tower Hamlets Travel Assistance Policy

Questions	Response
<p>Section 2 Children Home to School (5-16 years)</p> <p>1. Para 2.29 what will be the process for determining suitability, and what recourse will parents have to appeal?</p>	<p>‘Suitable’ is taken to mean the nearest qualifying school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any SEN that the child may have.</p> <p>Definitions and criteria are taken directly from the ‘Home to school travel and transport guidance: Statutory guidance for local authorities.</p> <p>As part of the EHCP process parental preference is considered when agreeing the school, however there may be occasions when the named school on an EHCP is not the preferred school of the parent. Parents have the choice to formally challenge the named school on an EHCP via tribunal.</p> <p>The Pupil Admissions Team have an appeal process for parents to challenge any decision regarding the nearest suitable school.</p>
<p>2. While Para 2.22 is not intended to be exhaustive, should it additionally mention families with multiple children in different schools where accompaniment is therefore not possible, particularly, but not exclusively, children with an EHCP?</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets has many families with multiple children who already make the arrangements without the need of travel assistance. Whilst this policy is not intended to be restrictive, it is intended to more closely align to statutory responsibilities, therefore adding a specific section on families with multiple children risks dramatically increasing the number of requests for travel assistance,</p>

	<p>and does not promote independence, which is one of the key strategic drivers of the revised policy.</p> <p>The suggested addition would result in much increased eligibility and additional financial pressures as a result.</p>
<p>3. What will be the budgetary impacts of the new policy, and how will that change if TfL are forced to go ahead with proposed changes to subsidised travel for Under 18s? Are there any other factors which could mean that savings targets are missed?</p>	<p>The policy will support the SEND Home to School Travel Assistance MTFs savings for 2020/21 and 2021/2022 (£1M), after the additional investment in previous years.</p> <p>Savings are contingent on the continued uptake of personal transport budgets, migrating external taxi routes from existing framework through to DPS, better managing annual demand for travel assistance, as well as the internal fleet continuing to optimise the delivery of the routes delivered.</p> <p>Financial monitoring, including savings is tracked via the Transport Demand Board.</p> <p>Any potential impact of changes to TfL eligibility will be carefully monitored and considered. The council is working closely with London Councils to understand the potential impact of changes. A final decision has not yet been reached on the agreed package between the Government and TfL. Until this is known we are unable to assess the specific impacts locally.</p>

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6.7 Budget Monitor as at P5 for 2020/21

Questions	Response
1. Does the lack of equality implications identified as directly resulting from this report pose a risk in terms of our statutory obligations.	This is not a decision-making report, it is for information only, so would not fall under those statutory obligations.
2. Of the Sports Leisure and Culture overspend of £0.16m could you confirm the breakdown between the GLL contract and Poplar Baths.	The GLL pressure is £596k of which £593k is a Covid 19 payment, and Poplar Baths is £255k of which £181k is a Covid 19 payment. Combined it is a £851k pressure of which £774k is Covid 19 payments. There are other mitigating items that reduce the overall position.
3. Considering talks with Unison are still ongoing could the estimated pressure of £0.17m arising from the implementation of Tower Rewards in 2020-21 and the full year impact of this (estimated to be £0.230m) be mitigated if Tower Rewards was to be reviewed and not implemented.	If the incremental increases in pay spinal points as a result of Tower Rewards were reversed, then it would reverse the additional costs associated. Such an action would require a new consultation on changes to Terms and Conditions and would be subject to equal pay issues. If this were reversed a reduction in pay for those specific members of staff would result.
4. The DSG is projected to be overspent by a gross of £0.4m. What is the projected overspend after COVID-19 relief?	If full relief is applied to the DSG budget due to COVID-19 associated overspend, then it would be reduced to an overspend of c£0.3m. The total deficit on the DSG is estimated at £11.5m by the year-end.

5. Although it may have reduced, filming in the borough has continued: why, therefore, has no income for filming been forecast?	Any continued income for filming will be included in the Parks and Culture budget, there is no specific line highlighting this in the report – it is effectively netted off.
6. The report states that the Council have met with the DfE and presented the recovery plan to manage the overspend on the High Needs Funding Block (HNFB) and how it will be addressed over the period 2019 – 2022. Was this meeting and plan agreed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?	The meeting took place on the 10 th February, so was before the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.
7. Has the High Needs Block deficit been reviewed following the 16th September ESFA template requirement on the Council and has the Council submitted an updated deficit recovery plan as per the Government template? If so, will this template be made available to councillors. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-deficit-management-plan	This work is ongoing, and the deficit recovery will be updated and regularly reviewed, presented to Schools Forum and, if required, made available to councillors. The refreshed recovery plan would be in place before the beginning of the next financial year in line with the ESFA template.
8. Has the council met with the London Finance Advisory Committee LFAC to ensure consistency of HNB spending usage with other London Partners?	No, the council has not met with LFAC to discuss this matter but is nonetheless in contact with LFAC on technical matters as necessary.
9. Is there no saving accrued from non-payment of wages during the Tower Rewards strikes	Yes, the saving has been included as part of the overall salary forecasts within the wider budget monitor.

6.8 Billingsgate Market - Update on Joint Working with the City of London Corporation	
Questions	Response
1. was the option of developing the site under public ownership like Blackwall Reach ever considered?	Yes. This site forms part of the relocation of the CoL major markets, and therefore attracts significant cost in relocation, which requires the maximum capital receipt. The best option for delivering this is via a disposal in the open market.
3.- how will the Council manage the conflict between its place making ambitions, its affordable housing policies and the maximisation of the sale value?	The Council has different roles as landowner and planning authority, which are relevant in cases where Council owned land is being sold for development. At officer level, the roles are carried out by different teams. In order to manage these roles, the Council is explicitly entering into the cooperation agreement, and will subsequently enter into the disposal agreement, in its capacity as landowner. The purchaser will need to take its development proposals for the site through the usual planning process, to which all relevant policy considerations will apply.

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