

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

NOTES OF AN INFORMAL, VIRTUAL CABINET DISCUSSION

HELD AT 5.33 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 26 MAY 2021

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

THIS DISCUSSION RELATED TO A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL MAYORAL DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE MAYOR AND PUBLISHED ON FRIDAY 28 MAY 2021

Members Present:

Mayor John Biggs

Councillor Sirajul Islam (Statutory Deputy Mayor for Community Safety, Faith and Equalities)

Councillor Rachel Blake (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing)

Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit)

Councillor Danny Hassell (Cabinet Member for Housing)

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 Puru Miah

Councillor Mohammed Pappu

Officers Present:

Miriam Adams

Interim Head of Pensions and Treasury

Kevin Bartle

(Interim Corporate Director, Resources and Section 151 Officer)

Stephen Bramah

(Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)

David Courcoux

(Head of the Mayor's Office)

Janet Fasan

(Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer)

Sharon Godman

(Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation)

Chris Harrison

(Liveable Streets Technical Director)

Rafiqul Hoque

Head of Housing Options

Dan Jones	(Divisional Director, Public Realm)
Daniel Kerr	(Strategy and Policy Manager)
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. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor announced:

- That he had this week delivered laptops to local children who needed this support to help access their studies.
- This morning he had visited Altab Ali House named in honour of Altab Ali who lived nearby. The building would be providing social housing.
- He noted the one-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd and the impact this had had across the globe including within the borough. He called for a minute silence to remember him and to remind everyone of the changes we wished to see.

3. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Councillor Mohammed Pappu, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee addressed the discussion. He noted the tabled Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses on Agenda Items 4.1 (Liveable Streets Brick Lane) and 4.2 (Liveable Streets Old Ford Road West).

He also provided an update on the Committee's meeting earlier in the which at which they had elected their Scrutiny Leads and established their sub-committees for the year. The Committee were looking to agree their work programme shortly and welcomed any feedback and suggestions to help shape this plan.

The Committee had also considered a number of items including:

- A call-in on the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Report which, whilst the Committee noted concerns, it did not refer the decision back to Cabinet. However, they would continue to monitor the issue.
- A session looking at air quality and progress against the Council's commitments.
- Work on proposals to continue to improve the effectiveness and profile of Scrutiny at the Council.

The **Mayor** thanked Councillor Mohammed Pappu for his update.

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

Nil items.

4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Liveable Streets Brick Lane consultation outcome report

Councillor Dan Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) – Lead on Public Realm, introduced the report providing feedback from the Brick Lane Liveable Streets consultation. He noted the proposals set out in the report and highlighted the good support levels from the consultation from businesses and residents.

The Mayor heard from a number of contributors including:

- Councillor Mohammed Pappu – including tabled Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses
- Councillor Peter Golds
- Councillor Puru Miah

A number of concerns were noted including; whether the proposals effectively supported all businesses apart from restaurants, whether there were suitable mitigation measures in place, danger of traffic displacement and the need to tackle air pollution in the area.

The Mayor noted the proposals set out and also that the changes were not as large as those elsewhere but that these options were seen as a good balance between different groups and that a number of mitigation measures were included as set out in the report. He noted that the consultation produced a positive result and that the scheme was a trial and would be monitored.

The Mayor welcomed the report and indicated that he was minded to approve the recommendations that were set out in the report.

4.2 Liveable Streets Old Ford Road West consultation outcome report

Councillor Dan Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) – Lead on Public Realm, introduced the report following a consultation exercise on liveable streets proposals for the Old Ford Road West area. The report set out details on the proposals which balanced the desires of different groups of residents to reduce traffic in some areas whilst keeping the borough moving. It was noted that the scheme would continue to be monitored and could be amended if needed.

The Mayor then heard a number of contributions including from:

- Councillor Mohammed Pappu – including tabled Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses

- Councillor Peter Golds
- Local residents John Griffiths and Neil Thompson

During discussion of the report a number of issues were mentioned including:

- The Equalities Impact Analysis
- The Impact of road closures
- The long-standing campaign to reduce traffic in the area
- That discussions with local people had been extensive and would be ongoing
- Investment in the public realm would make the area more pleasant for local residents.
- Enforcement actions would be used where appropriate.
- Emergency services were being consulted on the proposals and would gain the access to the area they needed.

The Mayor welcomed the report, thanked officers for their hard work on the project and indicated that he was minded to approve the recommendations that were set out in the report.

4.3 Report and Recommendations following Housing Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-committee Challenge session on 2nd March 2020 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'

Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report which followed up on a previous Scrutiny Challenge session on the Council's homelessness service particularly in relation to The Homelessness Reduction Act. He noted that there had been a lot of progress since the challenge session had taken place. The report set out a response to each of the recommendations from Scrutiny.

The Mayor welcomed the report on such an important issue. He highlighted that housing was a very challenging area given the high demand and that the Council would continue to look to tackle it. The Mayor indicated that he was minded to approve the recommendations that were set out in the report.

4.4 Pass Through Policy - London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council Procedure for granting Tower Hamlets Contractors Admitted Body Status to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Pension Fund

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, presented a report on a proposed 'Pass Through' policy in respect of staff pensions for occasions when staff were transferred to partner organisations under TUPE arrangements. The Pass-Through policy allows the Council to share the pension risk with the partner organisation which therefore allows more small contractors to tender for services. It also ensured that staff continued to enjoy the same pension benefits as before. It was important to note the impact on council financial liability although in reality this was limited as the Council was already the guarantor for these sorts of pensions.

The Mayor welcomed the report and indicated that he was minded to approve the recommendations that were set out in the report.

5. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

5.1 Nomination to Outside Bodies

The Mayor introduced a report setting out proposed nominations to outside bodies. He noted that the report had been published later than the main agenda but considered it a simple report to consider and that speed was important in confirming the nominations. He indicated he was minded to approve the recommendations set out.

5.2 Ceremony Fees and St George's Town Hall

The Mayor introduced the report on proposed Ceremony Fees and room fees and St George's Town Hall. He explained that the building was being refurbished for use by the Registrars Service and it was important to have agreed fees and charges so that the service could advertise the rooms for booking. He welcomed the report, whilst noting that it had only been published shortly before the discussion. He stated that he considered it a straight-forward report and it was important to take the decision to provide certainty to residents looking to book ceremonies. He indicated he was minded to agree the recommendations set out in the report.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Nil items.

7. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

8. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 6.50 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS