

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.05 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 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 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 Andrew Wood	
Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader of the Conservative Group)
Councillor James King	

Apologies:

Councillor Mufeedah Bustin	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Social Inclusion
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Others Present:

Christabel Shawcross	(Safeguarding Adults Board Chair LBTH)
Cheytan Vyas	(Director of Quality and Safety, WEL Clinical Commissioning Group)
Georgina Zumeris	(Detective Chief Inspector Safeguarding)

Officers Present:

Kevin Bartle	Interim Divisional Director of Finance, Procurement and Audit
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Adam Boey	(Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)
Claudia Brown	(Divisional Director of Adults Social Care)
David Courcoux	(Head of the Mayor's Office)
Emily Fieran-Reed	(Service Manager, Community Cohesion, Engagement and Commissioning, Strategy, Policy and Equality)
Asmat Hussain	(Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer)
Dan Jones	(Divisional Director, Public Realm)
Mehmet Mazhar	(Business Manager, Highways & Traffic Management)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Corporate Director, Place)
James Thomas	(Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Ikwi Mkpuru	School Organisation and Place Planning Manager
Phil Carr	(Strategy and Policy Manager, HAC)
Karen Swift	(Divisional Director, Housing)
Matthew Mannion	(Head of Democratic Services, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Mufeedah Bustin, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) – Lead on Social Inclusion
- Neville Murton, Corporate Director, Resources for whom Kevin Bartle, Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement and Audit deputised.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests but Councillors Motin Uz-Zaman and James King noted in respect of Agenda Item 6.7 (Extension of Housing Repairs and Maintenance Contract) that they were leaseholders. Councillor Sirajul Islam also noted that he was a council tenant. They took part in discussion of that item.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 23 September 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

The **Mayor** explained that this Extraordinary meeting of Cabinet had been arranged due to the large amount of business coming forward and the desire to ensure it could all be given sufficient time to be discussed.

He also noted that the Borough had now mowed, along with the rest of London into Tier Two of the Covid-19 restrictions and it was really important for everyone to keep as safe and well as possible.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses were tabled in respect of Agenda Items:

- 6.1 Safeguarding Adults – Board Annual Report
- 6.2 Safeguarding Children – Board Annual Report
- 6.3 Amalgamation of Cubitt Town Schools
- 6.4 Proposed closure of Shapla Primary School
- 6.5 Covid-19 Volunteer Hub Grant Variation
- 6.6 Approval of Procurement of Electric Vehicle Charge Points
- 6.7 Extension of Housing Repairs and Maintenance Contract

These were considered during discussion of the relevant items.

In addition Councillor James King, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provided a brief update on the recent meeting held by the Committee. The meeting had been called to establish the Scrutiny Leads and Sub-Committees for this municipal year and to hold the Call-in review of the recent Cabinet decision on the Housing Allocations Scheme which produced a good discussion of a difficult issue. The call-in had been referred back to the Mayor for further consideration.

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

The Call-In of the report taken at the Cabinet Meeting held on 23 September 2020 titled 'Common Housing Register Allocations Scheme' was considered.

The **Mayor** explained that he had only received the Call-In referral report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the afternoon and as it was a detailed, technical, issue he was proposing to defer responding to the points raised until the Cabinet meeting next week (28 October 2020). He confirmed that all other agreed actions that had not specifically been called in should now proceed as planned.

RESOLVED

1. That all recommendations that were not specifically challenged in the Call-In be implemented.
2. That reconsideration of the remaining two recommendations be deferred until the next Cabinet meeting on 28 October 2020.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20

Councillor Rachel Blake, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, introduced the report. In particular she highlighted the action the Board was taking to monitor the pace at which safeguarding adult reviews were taking place and also its discussions around how multi-agency partners can best work together. She then introduced the Chair of the Board, Christabel Shawcross.

Christabel Shawcross, took Members through the Annual Report looking at the key achievements, challenges and learning as set out in the report. This included comment on the initial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. She also highlighted the revised priorities for the Board. She noted a significant rise in concerns raised around vulnerable adults which demonstrated the hard work undertaken to ensure cases were being raised when they should be to allow review by services. Abuse referrals were often older people and were often around neglect.

She highlighted that increasing reporting on domestic abuse was a priority and more generally where adults did need support it was important to ensure they were engaged in how their care and protection was provided, making it a personal outcome. It was also important to ensure relatives were kept involved. She then highlighted specific case research which had brought forward key areas of learning required and were set out in the report.

The Cabinet discussed the report and noted:

- The importance of managing issues created by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The planned work with the Children's Safeguarding Partnership to support children transitioning to adult care.
- The improvements to the multi-agency dashboard and the work that was ongoing to improve multi-agency work

The **Mayor** thanked Christabel Shawcross and the Board for their work, he noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and agreed the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20.

6.2 Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2019-20

Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, introduced the report. He highlighted that the focus over the past year had been to establish the new arrangements and this was really important in ensuring the systems and processes were fit for purpose. Cross-community

and partner arrangements showed the importance everyone placed on this work. The next year should really help to show how the partnership can have a positive impact for young people. He then introduced Cheytan Vyas, Director of Quality and Safety and the WEL Clinical Commissioning Group and Georgina Zumeris, Detective Chief Inspector, Metropolitan Police, as Lead Partnership Members.

They noted that the leadership was now shared between the Council and these other Lead Agencies. An independent scrutineer role had been recruited to as well to support the Partnership.

Key priorities for the next year were around; strengthening safeguarding within education, the multi-agency approach to training around domestic abuse and also increasing the effectiveness of work to prevent criminal and sexual exploitation of children.

Work on quality assurance and in ensuring the voice of young people guided the work of the partnership was also going to be important. Other issues noted included work around the child death review process, the length of time serious case reviews should take and on the targeting of predators on children and preventing reoffending.

The **Mayor** thanked everyone involved in the work of the partnership and highlighted how important this area was to the Council. He welcomed how the profile of this work had been raised over the last few years. He noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the changes in the partnership model and the transition from the Local Safeguarding Children Board to the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership.
2. To note the work that has been carried out by the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children's Partnership over the year 2019-20.
3. To note the specific equalities considerations as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

6.3 Report on outcome of the preliminary stakeholder consultation (pre-statutory) on the proposal for the amalgamation of Cubitt Town Infants' and Cubitt Town Junior Schools.

Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, introduced the report. It proposed that Cubitt Town Infant and Primary schools merge to form one all-year primary school. This report followed a preliminary consultation of stakeholders.

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree to move to the publication of a statutory notice for 28 days, in respect of the proposal to amalgamate Cubitt Town Infants and Junior Schools into an all-through 3 to 11 years' primary school. This would take effect from 1st September 2021.
2. To note the Equalities Assessment as set out in Section 4 of the report and attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

6.4 Report on the outcome of the preliminary stakeholder consultation (pre-statutory) on the proposal to close Shapla Primary school.

Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, introduced the report following the preliminary consultation of stakeholders on the proposal to close Shapla Primary School. He highlighted that there was a surplus of places in this part of the borough. The school had seen falling pupil numbers for several years and reduced school rolls reduced the ability of the school to provide a full education offer to children. The school was also running at a financial deficit. Having considered the position it was necessary to look at a proposal to close the school. There was confidence that the pupils could be accommodated at other local schools.

The **Mayor** acknowledged the concerns raised and impact on those involved. He noted the importance of ensuing good participation in the next phase of the consultation process. The Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses were noted including around the need to report on progress supporting those at risk of redundancy. The recommendations were **agreed** as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree to move to the publication of a statutory notice for 28 days, in respect of the proposal to close Shapla Primary School. This will take effect from 31st August 2021, with the displaced pupils admitted to other nearby schools.
2. To note the Equalities Assessment set out in Section 4 of the report and attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

6.5 Covid 19 Volunteer Hub - Grant Variation for Capacity Building and Infrastructure Grant Programme

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the report which dealt with the continued support of the

Covid-19 Volunteer Hub. The report set out the achievements of the hub and the activities that had been supported such as delivery of PPE, food distribution and more.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report. He noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and **agreed** the recommendation as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the proposed grant variation to the funding agreement between the Council and Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service (THCVS) in relation to the Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grants Programme. This grant is delivered by a partnership led by THCVS, with the relevant element within that delivered by Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets (VCTH). The proposed variation will change the volunteering focus of the programme to prioritise the delivery of a Covid-19 Volunteering Hub to VCS organisations.

6.6 Approval of Procurement of Electric Vehicle Charge Points

Councillor Dan Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Public Realm, introduced the report which requested approval for the procurement of new electric vehicle charging points. He highlighted how the report was required as match funding was required against a grant secured from the Highways and Transportation Service. He noted the importance of making use of existing streetlights where possible providing local electricity networks could support that and he also asked that provision of charging points on housing estates be explored further.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report. He agreed the reasons for urgency as set out:

“The report was not published five clear days in advance of the meeting. The reason for urgency of this report is that we have recently secured some additional DfT funding to allow us to install extra Electric Vehicle Charge Points in the current financial year. The deadline for delivery is March 31st and to achieve that we need to raise an order as soon as possible to start the procurement process. We already have approval to use the TfL Supply contract and have placed a first call off for 82 charge points for delivery by January with previously approved funding.”

Finally, the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses were noted and the **Mayor agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To adopt a capital estimate of £170,250 to be included in the capital Programme 2020/21, and earmark £56,750 from the Highways &

Transportation Service Streetscene Enhancement Revenue budget to deliver 100 Electric Vehicle Charge Points by 31 March 2021.

2. To approve the use of the TfL (GULCS) Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Framework to procure these EVCP's.

6.7 Extension of contract H3190 "Housing Repairs and Maintenance and Gas Servicing and Repair"

Councillor Sirajul Islam, Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report which was asking for the extension of a housing repairs contract. The details of the contract were set out in the report. There had been a delay in going out to market due to the Covid-19 pandemic and so an extension to the existing contract was being sought until a new contract could be procured.

The **Mayor agreed** the reasons for urgency as set out in the report:

"The report was not published five clear days in advance of the meeting. This is due to the additional time required to review the report and its appendices and the need to bring the report forward to an earlier than planned meeting. As the existing contract expires in March 2021 any extension needs to have as much time as possible to enable continuing services to be planned and resourced for by the contractor. Reducing preparation time for the extension potentially reduces the ability of the contractor to guarantee a smooth transition into extension. If the decision is not taken there is a potential risk to the continuation of services."

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses. He stated that it was important to monitor the works that would be carried out during this extension. Finally, he **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree to extend the existing contract H3190 for housing repairs, maintenance, and gas servicing and repair for 8 months from 1st April 2021 to 30th November 2021 with an option to exit any of the four service elements earlier; the value of the contract extension is estimated to be up to £10M (the total contract value over ten years is around £160M) – this is not a requirement for additional funds; this is budgeted for within existing budgets for 2021/22
2. To note the risk and mitigation actions in relation to leasehold recharging that will be in place (Appendix B to the report).

6.8 Financial Arrangements for Tower Hamlets' Better Care Fund 2019-20 Programme (Section 75)

Councillor Rachel Blake, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, introduced the report. The report set out joint

arrangements with the Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group. It covered services such as hospital social workers, support and guidance for older people connected with many grass-roots organisations and the council's carer services. This shows how important it is for health and care services to work closely together. Great work was being done to support residents through this fund.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report and the highlights on the good work that was being done. He noted that in future these decisions could be decided under officer delegated powers. He **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree to the Council entering into a joint agreement with Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group, under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006, to give formal (retrospective) effect to the 2019-20 Better Care Fund Plan and programme and delegate the Corporate Director Health, Adults and Community the power to authorise the execution of the S75 agreement and any related documents
2. To approve the draft Section 75 agreement attached as Appendix 1 to this report and agree that any final amendments to the Section 75 agreement should be delegated to the Corporate Director Health, Adults and Community, following consultation with the Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer;
3. To agree to delegate to the Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community the authority to make amendments and enter into subsequent Better Care Fund Section 75 agreements for a period of five years from 2020/2021 including the power to authorise the execution of any of the relevant S75 agreements and any other related documents. Formal delegation will end on 31st March 2025.

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 6.41 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS