

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.31 P.M. ON MONDAY, 22 MARCH 2021

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)	
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:

Mayor John Biggs
Councillor Sirajul Islam

Officers Present:

Menara Ahmed	– (Hate Crime Policy & Partnership Manager)
Onyekachi Ajisafe	– (Strategy & Policy Officer, Strategy, Policy & Performance)
Dr Somen Banerjee	– (Director of Public Health)
Adam Boey	– (Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)
Ann Corbett	– (Divisional Director, Community Safety)
Afazul Hoque	– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Sophia Hussain	– Hestia
Hitesh Jolapara	– (Interim Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit)

Filuck Miah	– (Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Policy Team)
Denise Radley	– (Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	– (Corporate Director, Place)
James Thomas	– (Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
David Knight	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received at this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

The following Members for transparency declared a potential interest in relation to Item 9 Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions:

- I. Councillor Marc Francis due to his wife Councillor Rachel Blake being the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing; and
- II. Councillor Ehtasham Haque due to wife Councillor Sabina Akhtar being the Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

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

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1st March 2021 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

4. ACTION LOG

Received the Action Log, as a result of discussions on the timelines in relations to those matters outlined in the document the Committee noted the following response as to: (i) why the Resources directorate had an overspend of by £4.6m (indicated in the Cabinet Budget Monitoring report for period 9) for temporary accommodation; and (ii) why this overspend had gone unnoticed for so long.

- ❖ In previous years it was not uncommon practice to only report gross overspends in Directorates and thus this specific overspend was being offset by underspends elsewhere. The Council's Finance Improvement Plan is looking to improve budget management and such reporting

protocols have now been updated with the need to report all significant under and overspends, which is now taking place and has resulted in this particular overspend being brought to members' attention. The £4.6m overspend relates to the Housing Subsidy loss from placing Homeless clients into temporary accommodation (T.A.). Rents for T.A. are charged at current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates + £40, in line with other London Boroughs. This cost is met through the client's Housing Benefit claim. LBTH claim back the Housing Benefit payment through its subsidy claim at 90% of 2011 LHA rates and the £4.6m represents the difference between the Housing Benefit paid out for T.A. and the amount it can claim back from central government. The rates being paid for TA are higher than the grant received from government and thus if the Council was able to procure more cost-effective accommodation, the level of spend would reduce.

In conclusion, it was **agreed** to have more detailed breakdowns of such overspends.

5. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

No requests were received at this meeting.

6. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted

7. COVID-19 UPDATE

The Committee received an update from Covid-19 from Somen Banerjee – Director of Public Health, the main points of the questioning maybe summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Noted that the numbers vaccinated are lower than in other local authorities because Tower Hamlets has a disproportionately young population with the lowest proportion of over 65s in the country at 6 percent. However, when one looks at Borough in comparison to the rest of North-East London the numbers vaccinated in relation to the average being 2 percentage points lower. In addition, it was noted that there is work being undertaken in the Borough with GP practices and community pharmacies.
- ❖ Indicated that careful consideration was required going forward on about how the Committee continues to scrutinise the impact and response of Covid-19 as new challenges and situations emerge and that this will need to be reflected in the Committees Work Programme.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Somen Banerjee for his presentation and to all members and guests for their contributions in the discussions on this topic.

8. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT

8.1 Town Hall - Impact on Assets/LBTH Estate; Financing, Capacity

The Committee considered a presentation that reviewed the progress on the plans for the New Town Hall and how this is being delivered. The presentation covered (i) financing of the project; (ii) changing “the way we work”; and (iii) “Resident Hub” and the “Local Presence” The Chair welcomed Mayor Biggs; Ann Sutcliffe (Corporate Director for Place); Yasmin Ali Project Director and Sarah Steer Project Manager (Town Hall Project) to tonight’s meeting. The key themes arising from the questioning on the presentation may be summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Was advised that the funding for the project comes primarily from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) which operates under a policy framework set by HM Treasury and ensures that lending to local government complies with statute. Also borrowing from the PWLB is very straightforward and at a very low rate of interest.
- ❖ Observed that the new civic centre will make full use of its location in the most accessible part of Tower Hamlets. It will be served by four different train and tube lines including Crossrail, along with well-used bus and cycle routes. The building has been designed to be more than just an office for council staff.
- ❖ Was reminded that the business case for this project it had been demonstrated that it was better value for money than renting a building elsewhere or extending tenancy agreement for Mulberry Place and that in spite of being subject to a further review in the light of the different financing options becoming available it still is the most viable method of financing the project.
- ❖ Noted that it is being constructed on the site of the former Royal London Hospital building, the new civic centre will provide 26,700m² of civic space, with the ground floor designed for public use. In addition, LBTH will be welcoming partner organisations to co-locate in the building, which will enable residents to be served by a diverse range of services from one site.
- ❖ Noted that the entire ground floor of the new civic centre will be dedicated to public use. A new Idea Store that will include supported access to a full range of council services alongside books, a café, drop in space and new public square.
- ❖ Expressed concern that as the new civic centre has been designed to be more than just an office for council staff how will this impact on the future of the libraries and arts provision in Whitechapel for example given its close proximity to the London Hospital site on the Whitechapel Idea Store. Especially as this was a trusted space where residents are able to explore and share reading, information, and knowledge. In response it was noted that the Whitechapel Ideas Store was to be re-developed into part of a learning campus with a stronger focus on learning, skills and supporting residents into work.

- ❖ Noted in response that the intention of the Council regarding cultural and creative enrichment in the Borough was to promote venues such as the Brady Centre as welcoming places where local people can immerse themselves in every form of art; learn from local artists; create their own art; watch theatre, music, and dance performances; and learn about art and culture through books and reading.
- ❖ Noted that it is estimated that the cost of this project is in the region of £114.5 million. The Council will be saving public money because as well as securing ongoing annual savings of at least £5m from rental of Mulberry Place, there will be additional savings from more efficient working. Also capital receipts: £78.2m to £91.2m from potential disposals from the sale of old council buildings that will no longer be needed once staff have moved to the new civic centre, which will go towards the £114.5m estimated total cost of the new civic centre.
- ❖ Wanted a breakdown of the capital receipts from the above-mentioned disposals as outlined in the updated Business Case.
- ❖ Noted that the design of the new civic centre will celebrate the rich history of the building – with a new building ‘wrapping’ around the old to create dynamic and flexible spaces for the workforce. Also, by moving from Mulberry Place to Whitechapel will relocate the Councils ‘Front Door’ presence to the centre of the Borough.
- ❖ Noted that the new civic centre would be heated by an air source heat pump system that does not create heat. It simply moves it from one place to another through the vapour compression cycle thereby raising its temperature.
- ❖ Noted that engagement is currently underway with staff on facilities within LBTH buildings in a post Covid environment and that elements of the Covid layout will be considered alongside the revised plans i.e. one-way systems around the floor layouts.
- ❖ Noted that staff are to continue working as they have been and are not being instructed to return to work in the office, this is purely preparing to be ready when the guidance allows LBTH to commence a phased return.
- ❖ Was advised that as part of the wider vision on changing the way LBTH works an engagement programme is underway with staff to review the desk to staff ratio from 6:10 to 4:10, with more flexible working furniture within the building for different work styles.
- ❖ Was informed that Staff will be relocated from John Onslow House and Albert Jacob House to Mulberry Place. Also, that all desks at Mulberry Place have been allocated at divisional level, rather than individual teams, allowing greater flexibility and enabling LBTH to test how the 4:10 principle works ahead of the move to the new civic centre. Whilst also creating additional flexible working spaces within Mulberry Place.

Accordingly, it was agreed:

1. **Thanked** Mayor Biggs; Ann Sutcliffe; Yasmin Ali Project and Sarah Steer for their presentation and to all members for their contributions in the discussions on this topic; and

2. Indicated that the following should be added to the Committees Action Log.

- A. **(i)** the evolution of the new civic centre business case; **(ii)** the capital receipts from the potential disposals from the sale of old council buildings as outlined in the new civic centre business case; and **(iii)** the assessment of the relocation of the Councils 'Front Door' presence to the centre of the Borough.

8.2 Domestic Abuse

The Committee received a presentation that outlined the extent of Covid-19 impact on Domestic Abuse and effectiveness of partners response. Including (i) national and local policy landscape; (ii) culturally sensitive provision; (iii) funding; (iv) impact of pandemic; (v) the Independent domestic violence advisory (IDVA) provision; (vi) adult and children social care; (vii) housing for victims; and (viii) the next steps. The Chair welcomed Denise Radley(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community); Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety); Menara Ahmed (Hate Crime Policy & Partnership Manager) and Sophia Hussain (HESTIA) to tonight's meeting. The key themes arising from the questioning on the presentation may be summarised as follows:

The Committee

- ❖ Observed that whilst domestic abuse affects women from all ethnic groups, and there is no evidence to suggest that women from some ethnic or cultural communities are any more at risk than others. The form the abuse takes may vary; in some communities, for example, domestic abuse may be perpetrated by extended family members. Whatever their experiences, women from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities are likely to face additional barriers to receiving the help that they need **e.g.** unwilling to seek help from statutory agencies or afraid of rejection from their own community if they ask for outside help.
- ❖ Noted that it may be particularly hard for these women to admit to having problems with their marriage, and they may experience additional pressure from their extended family to stay with their partner **e.g.** If their marriage fails, it may be seen as their fault, and they may be blamed for damaging the family honour; and treated as an outcast within their community.
- ❖ Commented that if they have recently arrived in the country, or if their first language is not English, it may be much harder for them to understand the systems of support available or to access appropriate sources of help or be unaware of support services and not know where they should go to get help.
- ❖ Noted the assistance available from Hestia that supports women and children experiencing domestic abuse to find safe, secure, and suitable refuge spaces across London. Observed that Hestia's refuges are a

place of safety for any mother and child made homeless by domestic abuse. They also offer emotional and practical support and ensure that every service user has an up-to-date risk assessment; support plans tailored to their needs and to start a conversation around healthy relationships.

- ❖ Commented on the rising number of allegations of abuse in the home were an indication of the “emotional burden” weighing on many couples as a result of the coronavirus lockdowns.
- ❖ Noted agencies within the Borough have been upping their training and that undertaking an audit of safeguarding interventions to look at practice quality around domestic abuse
- ❖ Noted in response to their concerns that the restrictions on face to face visits during the lockdowns have affected earlier identification of abuse. Agencies have provided training to raise awareness amongst their staff on how to safeguard individuals remotely.
- ❖ Noted that the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) had secured additional funding to assist to charities supporting vulnerable people including victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse. The Committee welcomed this funding as it will provide a stronger safety net for anyone facing the threat of abuse in their own home.
- ❖ Agreed that domestic abuse is a complex problem that requires a coordinated, multi-faceted approach. The needs of different members of a household (including adults perpetrating and experiencing abuse and children) are multi-dimensional and inter-linked, and meeting these requires integrated and joined-up services. Which involves collaboration between, for example, police, child protection and specialist support services for people who have experienced abuse.
- ❖ Committee in response to the events surrounding the death of Sarah Everard, recognised the wider problem of gender-specific violence. Members agreed on the need for advocacy and support for women’s rights to live in a safe space, without having to change their behaviour to maintain their safety. Also, to encourage public education about unacceptable behaviour that is either threatening or misogynistic e.g. putting in good programmes within schools educate students and staff around male violence towards women and how ‘socially accepted behaviours’, including ‘locker room banter’ contribute to this.

Accordingly, the Chair:

1. **Thanked** The Chair welcomed Denise Radley (Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community); Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety); Menara Ahmed (Hate Crime Policy & Partnership Manager) and Sophia Hussain (HESTIA) for their presentation and to all members for their contributions in the discussions on this topic; and
2. **Indicated** that the impact of Covid-19 on Domestic Abuse should be included in the Action Log

9. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

The Committee **noted** the updates that had been submitted from the Scrutiny Leads.

10. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

Following comments by the Committee the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions (PDSQ) were agreed for submission to the Cabinet on the 24th March 2021 (See attached appendix).

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

Nil items

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

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 8.43 p.m.

Chair, Councillor James King
Overview & Scrutiny Committee



Meeting of the

CABINET

Wednesday, 24 March 2021 at 5.30 p.m.

TABLED PAPERS

	PAGE NUMBER
5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions	
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to unrestricted business to be considered.	3 - 16
5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
(Under provisions of Section 30, Rule 59 of the Constitution).	17 - 22
Cabinet Decision 6.2 – Outcome of the revised approach to day support in adult social care.	
Overview and Scrutiny Committee's response to the call-in.	

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**Pre-Decision
Scrutiny
Questions
for
Cabinet
24th March, 2021**

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Item 6.1 Black Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report	
Questions	Response
1. Page 11 of BAME inequalities reports states 23 recommendations, but on counting its showing 29 - which is correct?	The report makes 23 recommendations. Recommendation 1 focuses on the core actions required to become an anti-racist borough with six sub-recommendations.
2. What is the budget allocated to deliver these recommendations?	The budget for delivery of recommendations will be identified as part of the action plan development.
3. Which department is responsible for delivering these recommendations?	The strategy, policy and performance service will be responsible for overseeing the coordination with each directorate responsible for ensuring these recommendations are delivered throughout the council and our work with partners. In addition, we are currently developing an action plan which will assign action owners and ensure there is accountability in delivery. However, many of the recommendations are external facing and we will be working with partners to sign-up to the pledge and develop a plan to implement these recommendations. The partnership executive group will seek to establish a sub-group responsible for overseeing the coordination and reporting progressed related to implementation.

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Item 6.3 Community Hubs	
1. What was the Capital Cost of building/converting the 5 community hubs?	The total capital cost of works to the five community hubs is £5.856m.
2. Page 21 appendix B "Locality Report 'Community Hubs in Tower Hamlets' " none of the 12 centres analysed were in the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar area, why?	The Locality report focusses on the five buildings that were designated as community hubs and seven buildings managed by TRAs which are freestanding community centres, rather than community rooms managed by TRAs. There are no council owned premises in the Isle of Dogs that match these criteria. The Cabinet report is concerned with the future management of the five community hubs.
Item 6.4 Council Buildings Leased to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations	
1. Appendix 7 page 21 4. "Where there is shared use of the same space, a reduced rate of 40% or 20% CBRR may apply using the principles set out in Appendix 3, Proportionate Rent Reduction" Is that rent reduction only applied to the space which has wider community use?	If there is a discreet, separately accessible space mainly used for prayer and other faith based activities, the council apportions the rent between this area and that used for inclusive community activity. The CBRR is then applied at the standard rate for the inclusive community area only. Where there is no clear physical distinction or there is a mix of activity the proportionate rent reduction principles would apply. If the inclusive community use is over 50% of the available

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<p>If for example a space has a main hall exclusively used for prayer and side spaces used for a variety of purposes i.e. some prayer and sometimes community, is the reduction only applied to the side spaces?</p>	<p>time/space, CBRR will be applied on the whole rent at 40%. If inclusive use is between 25% and 50%, the CBRR rate is 20%.</p>
<p>2. Appendix 7 page 22 <i>"However, where an organisation is serving a specific local area where the majority of the population are active members of a particular faith,"</i> Are there any such local areas and where are they in Tower Hamlets? and by active is this defined as going to a place of worship on a regular basis to pray?</p>	<p>While no specific areas have been identified, this clause has been included to ensure this issue can be addressed in an open and consistent way. 'Active members' would normally be people who attend a place of worship.</p>

Item 6.6 Intermediate Housing Policy

1. On the intermediate housing register:

Why has the exclusive period been set to 3 months? Is this a realistic timeframe for applicants to hear about a property, view and bid, particularly given the affordability checks etc?

This is a prerogative afforded to all Local Authorities by the GLA in London (and by Homes England to authorities outside of London). It allows local authorities, where intermediate homes are built within their area, to set a local prioritisation for the initial first three months of marketing any intermediate housing schemes which are either fully or partially GLA funded. Thereafter, there is a requirement from the GLA that the marketing of these homes goes out to the wider London Pool of applicants. In utilising this prerogative, the Council will ensure that our residents have the first opportunity to apply for Intermediate homes built within the Borough. For ease and simplification, **the initial three months marketing using our localised prioritisation matrix will apply to all new intermediate housing schemes built within the Borough, irrespective of how these schemes have been funded.**

The new Intermediate Housing Register of interest is an additional marketing tool which registered providers and developers will be able to use to market any new schemes to applicants who have expressed an interest in intermediate housing products. The Intermediate Housing Register will be promoted on the website to all residents. Our Housing Options Service will also highlight this as an alternative housing solution when approached for housing advice, particularly where adult children residing with their parents seek alternative accommodation. The register can be used by the registered providers and developers to target local residents only during the initial three months of marketing. The three-month period does not imply that the entire end to end process of application has to be completed during that time frame. As long as

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Can you confirm that if eligible applicants are in the pipeline by the end of the 3-month period, they will not lose out to out-of-borough applicants who subsequently express interest? Why was 3-months chosen as a reasonable period of time?

a local applicant applies during those first three months, their application should continue to be progressed and prioritised.

Yes, applicants within our local prioritisation will be prioritised right up to the date that the initial three-month marketing period ends, they will be the only applicants who can apply during this time. The intention of the 'localised priority' in the first three months of marketing any new Intermediate Housing products is to give our residents a head start in advance of applicants from the wider London pool. Once that initial marketing period has ended and the intermediate homes are marketed to applicants pan-London, it will then be a case of whichever eligible applicant provides all the necessary paperwork first will securing one of these homes. The policy sets out to ensure that our residents have a head start in securing any new intermediate homes. We would expect that the RP/developer won't drop or hold back a local resident's application that is 'ready to go' in favour of a non-resident.

The initial three-month marketing period conforms with the GLA's Affordable Homes Programme 2021-2026 which allows Local Authorities to set their own prioritisation for the first three-initial months of marketing any new Intermediate Housing Schemes. It is also a reasonable compromise, registered providers and developers will need to sell on these homes and we could not impose any further restrictions which could delay a return on the registered provider/ developer's investment. Doing so could deter registered providers and developers from building the homes that we need in the Borough and impact on the delivery of new homes for all our residents.

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<p>Priority for households who would wholly vacate a social housing property is understood, but have you considered additional priority, perhaps after Forces, for alleviating other pressures on the list? For example, where a family is overcrowded, but would not be if adult children were to move out. While this won't free up property, it will ease pressure in band 2.</p>	<p>Officers considered additional priority groups and debated including (a definition) of key workers but decided not to include additional categories on the basis that the anticipated demand will be so great that we will not get down to any other additional categories .</p> <p>We anticipate that there will be significant interest in joining the register from applicants currently in Band 3 of the Common Housing Register, especially the adult children of residents in the Borough. The Housing Options Team will signpost potentially suitable applicants towards the Intermediate Housing Register of interest.</p>
<p>2. Will a similar 3-month rule apply to private for sale homes developed/owned by LBTH or partner housing associations in Tower Hamlets?</p>	<p>No. the initial three-month marketing rule applies only to new intermediate housing products, including shared ownership homes.</p>
<p>3. Some local RP's have their own schemes like shared ownership and key worker. Is this list going to include those schemes or remain separate?</p>	<p>The localised prioritisation for the initial three months of marketing will apply to all new intermediate housing schemes and products within the borough.</p>

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Item 6.8 London Dock School

1. 8.12 refers to the lack of certainty over who the provider will be, albeit that DfE have expressed the intention to work with Mulberry. When will this be certain? Is there any scope to hold off on exposure to clawback until this has been confirmed?

There is currently no uncertainty over the provider of the new school, and this will be the Mulberry Schools Trust. Paragraph 8.12 simply refers to the theoretical ability of the DfE to appoint a different academy provider.

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Item 6.9 Contract Forward Plan 2020-21 Quarter Four

6.9a Appendix. 2 - Contracts Forward Plan 2020/21 – Quarter Four

1. Can we include details of the contract length to allow us to better understand and judge the value of the contract?

Length of contracts will be included as part of all future reports.

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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>22 March 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Cllr James King, Chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Call-in of 'Revised approach to day support in adult social care'</p>	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Decision made by Cabinet on Wednesday, 3 March 2021 in respect of agenda item 6.2 'Revised approach to day support in adult social care' was 'called in' under the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution by Councillors Gabriela Salva-Macallan, Shah Ameen, Shad Chowdhury, Tarik Khan and Victoria Obaze ('Call-in Members').

On 18 March 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Committee) convened a meeting to consider the following:

- the Cabinet report
- the Cabinet Decision published on 5 March 2021
- the "call in" requisition from the Call-in Members (undated)
- representations by the Call-in Members
- representations from a member of the community
- representations by the Cllr Rachel Blake, Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the decision be referred to the Cabinet for reconsideration, including consideration of the alternative courses of action set out below:

1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets and use from the wider community, and any new or existing grants available for allocation to adult social care
2. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard's Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
3. That the Pritchard's Road Day Centre continues as an "in-house" service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
4. The Committee would like to see the previous reviews undertaken about Day Opportunities Centres, and information the council has about the impact of the proposed changes (new Hub) to existing activities/services at Sonali Gardens
5. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision

6. That the Council action the Government's guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre's
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>
7. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor's proposed changes collectively
8. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential

1. THE CABINET'S DECISION

1.1 The Cabinet's decision, published on 5 March 2021:

- To agree the closure of Physical Disability Day Opportunities, Riverside day centre and Pritchard's Road day centre with effect from 4 May 2021
- To agree to develop Russia Lane as a 'dementia hub' day service
- To agree to open a community support hub from May 2021 onwards (if it is safe to do so in light of the Covid-19 pandemic)
- To endorse the proposal to encourage more people to organise their own day support through a direct payment
- To agree the commitment to make Tower Hamlets a more inclusive place for people with care and support needs

2. THE 'CALL IN' REQUISITION

2.1 The alternative course of action proposed in the call-in is as follows:

1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets
2. Funding for these day centres should be drawn down from the additional and unexpected £2.9 million Social Care Grant awarded to LBTH
3. The spaces provided by these centres should be used as part of a wider community offer, including after 4pm when Day Centre service users are not using them, in order to generate income and provide an additional community resource
4. That capital allocation be used to ensure that the centres be suitably adapted to meet the needs of specific types of service users and that all service users, carers and providers will have confidence that they are suitable high quality spaces to use to hire for community use
5. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard's Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
6. That the Pritchard's Road Day Centre continues as an "in-house" service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
7. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision
8. That the Council action the Government's guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre's
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>

9. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor's proposed changes collectively
10. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential

3. CALL-IN MEMBERS' PRESENTATION

3.1 Call-in members presented the reasons for call-in and proposed alternative course of action, and added that:

- Keeping in-house provision very important
- Pandemic impacts leave an important ongoing need in recovery
- Care and support for individuals vitally important for future positioning for the council – even given the discretionary nature of day care/support
- Other councils (Haringey) are investing in these services, not reducing them
- Existing centres play an important community role with many services provided

3.2 A member of the community, Mr Zakir Hussain, spoke about his concerns about the Cabinet decision to the Committee, and added that:

- New hubs don't prioritise mental health, which is contrary to recognition of pandemic impacts
- No clarity of specific services to be delivered from new hub, to replace existing arrangements at the Pritchard's Road or Riverside centres – where specialists are on-site
- No alternative suggested for day opportunities
- Consultation was not fit for purpose

3.3 Committee members posed a number of questions concerning:

- services affected by the closure of both Riverside and Pritchard's Road day centres
- the kind of day support provided during the pandemic lockdown
- how the consultation was received
- concerns about the new Hub
- slower, more phased implementation of changes
- different funding options

4. LEAD MEMBER'S PRESENTATION

4.1. The Lead Member reflected that it was clear from consultation that services are highly valued; and talked about:

4.2. The design of the future service – continuing to meet collective needs, which is why there's a flexible and safe support hub at Sonali Gardens, which also arranges services at the spokes (other locations); therefore replacement services are considered.

- 4.3. The transition services set out – social worker assessments, specialists’ transition arrangements for Pritchard’s Road, commissioned mental health services
- 4.4. Budget issues – will be spending £5 million more in ASC in response to need
- 4.5. Alternative courses of action – cannot retain as it will not meet overall need; using £2.9 million won’t work; co-production is a good option; transitioning into new hub could be an important part of pandemic recovery.
- 4.6. The Committee asked further questions on matters including:
 - Staff impacts associated with closing centres
 - Accessing the new hub – different location in the borough
 - Consultation – open and closed questions
 - Communications of the proposed changes for users/community

5. CONSIDERATION OF THE ‘CALL IN’

- 5.1. After hearing from the Call-in Members and the Lead Member, the Committee considered the following issues and concerns:
 - following the concerns raised previously about the budget and savings proposals, the Committee remains unconvinced about the council cutting services at this time, during pandemic impacts and recovery, and putting money into reserves
 - the overall budget for day support is relatively small for our most vulnerable, and that the scale of the proposed changes is too large to cope with, and at this stressful time in people’s lives (pandemic)
 - changes (new hub) will mean different access/transport issues for people
 - limitations about the consultation

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. The Committee unanimously RESOLVED that the decision be referred to the Cabinet for reconsideration, including consideration of the alternative courses of action set out in the call-in requisition with the following additional and amended wording:
 - point 1 – add ‘..and use from the wider community, and any new or existing grants available for allocation to adult social care.’
 - remove points 2, 3 and 4
 - add that OSC would like to see the previous reviews undertaken about Day Opportunities Centres, and information the council has about the impact of the proposed changes (new Hub) to existing activities/services at Sonali Gardens
- 6.2. Therefore, the Committee proposes the following alternative courses of action:
 1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets and use from the wider community, and any new or existing grants available for allocation to adult social care

2. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard's Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
3. That the Pritchard's Road Day Centre continues as an "in-house" service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
4. The Committee would like to see the previous reviews undertaken about Day Opportunities Centres, and information the council has about the impact of the proposed changes (new Hub) to existing activities/services at Sonali Gardens
5. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision
6. That the Council action the Government's guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre's
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>
7. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor's proposed changes collectively
8. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential

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