

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Monday, 24 May 2021 at 6.30 p.m., Committee Room One - Town Hall
Mulberry Place**

Due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, the press and public are encouraged to watch the meeting remotely through the <https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> site

Members:

Chair: Councillor Mohammed Pappu

Vice Chair: TBC

Councillor Bex White

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Councillor Marc Francis

Councillor Ehtasham Haque

Councillor Denise Jones

Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan

Councillor Leema Qureshi

Councillor Andrew Wood

Co-opted Members:

Halima Islam

Co-Optee

James Wilson

Co-Optee

Deputies:

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

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	SECTION ONE	WARD	PAGE NUMBER(S)
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
	To receive any apologies for absence.		
2.	DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS	All Wards	7 - 8

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, please see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded to declare the nature of the interest and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it's the Members' responsibility to declare any interests form and to update their register of interest form as required by the Code.

If in doubt as to the nature of your interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services

3.	UNRESTRICTED MINUTES	All Wards	
	To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
3 .1	26th April, 2021	All Wards	9 - 40
4.	REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS	All Wards	
	To receive any petitions (to be notified at the meeting).		
5.	FORTHCOMING DECISIONS	All Wards	41 - 66
	The Committee is asked to note the Cabinets Forward Plan.		
6.	APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES FOR 2021-21	All Wards	67 - 90
7.	UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN'	All Wards	
7 .1	Call-In Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report	All Wards	91 - 156
8.	AIR QUALITY CHALLENGE SESSION	All Wards	157 - 180
	To follow		
9.	IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All Wards	181 - 212
	To follow		
10.	VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS	All Wards	

(Time allocated – 5 minutes each)

11. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS **All Wards**

To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet.

(Time allocated – 30 minutes).

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

To consider any other unrestricted business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC **All Wards**

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.”

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

SECTION TWO

WARD

**PAGE
NUMBER(S)**

14. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL) CABINET PAPERS **All Wards**

To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet.

(Time allocated 15 minutes).

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

To consider any other exempt/ confidential business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

Next Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 28 June 2021 at 6.30 p.m. to be held in Committee Room One - Town Hall
Mulberry Place

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Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests. In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

Further Advice contact: Janet Fasan Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4800.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 5.32 P.M. ON MONDAY, 26 APRIL 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

Officers Present:

Dr Somen Banerjee	– (Director of Public Health)
Adam Boey	– (Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)
Sharon Godman	– (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation)
Afazul Hoque	– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Will Tuckley	– (Chief Executive)
David Knight	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for lateness had been received from Councillor Denise Jones.

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

3.1 18th March 2021

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

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18th January 2021 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

3.2 22nd March 2021

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

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd March 2021 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly. Subject to the inclusion of the following in the list of those present:

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

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil items

5. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted

6. 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:

- ❖ Observed that Tower Hamlets GP Care Group has worked hard to ensure that any unused supplies of vaccine are use appropriately especially with the Pfizer vaccine where there is an issue about shelf-life once unfrozen, to maximise the people who are vaccinated. Accordingly the GP Care Group have a process whereby they have a set of contacts that they have identified (e.g. those in the highest need groups) are able to access unused vaccines. Therefore, people should not show up to a vaccination centre without an appointment as they would not be seen.
- ❖ Were advised that people have expressed uncertainty about getting a jab, or who were unwilling or unable was because they did not trust the vaccines; they did not feel the vaccines were necessary for them and the ease of access to vaccination centres. Therefore the GP Care Group and the Council are reaching out to non-responders, ramping up promoting of the vaccine programme and establishing walk in centres.
- ❖ Heard that whilst reactions to the AstraZeneca vaccine have been very rare and this includes when blood clots and low levels of platelets occur between four and 28 days after the jab. Therefore, some residents are now expressing reluctance to have their next jab although overwhelming message is this is a safe and effective vaccine whereas the risk of getting severely ill from the coronavirus, or of being hospitalised in intensive care, is much higher.
- ❖ Was informed that LBTH have set up a network of Covid Champions who will help residents to stay up to date with the latest advice about Covid-19. Covid Champions provide a trusted source of information and will help to dispel myths and avoid confusion. They help their family, friends, and the wider community to make sense of the latest advice and information, to make sure we all stay safe and alert to the risks of the virus. The Champion are sent regular updates on Covid-19 and they aim to get the right information to local residents, to keep themselves, their family, and community safe.
- ❖ Was advised that regarding the Indian variant it is one of four mutated versions of coronavirus which have been designated as being "of concern" by UK public health bodies, with others first being identified in Kent, South Africa, and Brazil. The Indian variant has mutated to become less recognisable to neutralising human antibodies and therefore allows it to get past the first line of immunological defence in people who have been vaccinated or previously infected, enabling the virus to carry on circulating.
- ❖ Wanted to receive localised data regarding household infection rates, positive cases by age group and ward and hospital admission rates in the Borough by age group.

- ❖ The Committee indicated that it would wish to be updated on the knowledge surrounding the role of children in the transmission Covid-19 and the role of schools during the pandemic, based on the experience in the Borough this data should include transmission to and from staff in school settings, school-related mitigation measures including risk communication, testing, contact tracing and the efficacy of partial and full school closures.
- ❖ Noted in terms of numbers there is not any significant increase in numbers of cases in schools.
- ❖ Noted that Tower Hamlets Council, NHS Test and Trace is providing additional testing and genomic sequencing in targeted areas which follows the identification of multiple confirmed cases of the variants first identified in South Africa and Brazil. All the confirmed cases will be self-isolating.
- ❖ Was advised that any resident over 11 years of age and live, work or are educated in an E1 postcode are being encouraged to take a Covid-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test which is a type of coronavirus test you do at home and send back to be processed in a laboratory. The results are sent by text and email.
- ❖ Noted that enhanced contact tracing will be used for individuals testing positive with a variant of concern (VOC). In these instances, contact tracers will look back over an extended period to determine the route of transmission.
- ❖ Was advised if a resident has symptoms, they then need to book a free test online or by phone so they can be tested at a testing site or have a testing kit sent to their home. Residents should also continue using twice-weekly rapid testing alongside the PCR test as part of surge testing.
- ❖ Noted that local data is being used to target roadshows in those areas of low uptake so as to promote the vaccination programme and this will be shared with Members.
- ❖ Was informed that going forward it is intended that the vaccination need to be part of the Borough's health and care system as with Influenza Vaccination Programme and this will enable the Borough to achieve heightened levels of uptake.

In conclusion, the Chair:

1. Thanked Somen Banerjee for his regular updates and contributions that have been really insightful and helpful to understand the scale of the threat posed to the Borough by Covid-19; and
2. Indicated that Members will discuss how take this forward into the next municipal year.

7. MAYORS SPOTLIGHT

7.1 Executive Mayor's Priorities

The Chair introduced the main substantive item this evening that will focus on the Mayor's Spotlight.

He (i) thanked the Executive Mayor John Biggs and the Chief Executive Will Tuckley for, attending this evenings meeting; and (ii) indicated that that the Committee wished to understand:

- ❖ Council's Response to Covid-19.
- ❖ Pandemic Recovery Priorities; and
- ❖ Achievements of this past year and any Non Covid challenges and situations for Tower Hamlets.

The key themes arising from the questioning on the presentation may be summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Enquired what the Council and its partners would be doing to address residents' concerns (i) following the murder investigations that are underway following fatal stabbings in Poplar and Canning Town; and (ii) in regard to addressing the high incidence anti-social behaviour in Tower Hamlets.
- ❖ Noted that as a consequence of these fatal stabbings a section 60 notice had been issued.
- ❖ Noted that whilst police-recorded crime had seen its biggest annual decrease since 2010 with robbery and theft having dropped dramatically during 2020 as people have not been in as many situations where they felt they had to pull a knife or a gun because people have not been gathering at places like they used to before lockdown, but with restrictions being lifted there are concerns of a spike in knife and gun crime as venues re-open and groups begin to mix again in public places - increasing the potential for conflict.
- ❖ Noted that there are two types of people who tend to carry weapons – criminals for threats and their protection because of their lifestyle choices and young people who believe that every other young person is carrying a knife. The police can tackle the first group by concentrating on organised gang crime, but a lot needs to be done to help the young people change their mindset so that they realise that not everyone carries a knife despite what they are led to believe.
- ❖ Was advised that the recent stabbings in Poplar and Canning Town have led to a renewed focus on knife crime and how to reduce it. One power available to the Police Service being a Section 60 notice and understood that a significant percentage of older people in the Borough feel if its use means that lives can be saved, then these residents feel it is a very good thing.
- ❖ Noted the increased activity of local policing teams in the Bethnal Green; Spitalfields and Whitechapel wards these officers are made up of officers based in the area, supported by additional officers from the wider area who are working closely with LBTH, organisations, partners to address local problems.
- ❖ Was pleased to be informed about the crackdown on antisocial behaviour including the use of nitrous oxide, with police officers

undertaking foot patrols and the Council's Trading Standards Officers working with the police and residents to tackle retail outlets that sell gas to people who misuse it. In addition, it was noted that residents can report discarded canisters so the Council can clean them up. Whilst residents can also report retail outlets selling nitrous oxide to Trading Standards.

- ❖ Noted the Isle of Dogs programme that aims to provide centre-based and detached community outreach through mentoring, courses providing qualifications and other support tailored to meet the needs of young people on the Island.
- ❖ Welcomed the Mayors offer to attend future Scrutiny meetings to ensure in a consistent and objective scrutiny of the work being done to add social value by contributing to the long-term wellbeing and resilience of residents, communities, and the Borough.
- ❖ Noted that the Council is looking closely at the wider financial and non-financial value through its day to day activities in terms of the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital created and the environment **e.g.** to look beyond the financial cost of a contract and consider how the services commissioned and procurement can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Tower Hamlets. As the Council is becoming increasingly financially self-reliant, it has considered how to make its limited resources go ever further while still maintaining the quality and breadth of services. As such, it can be seen as a complementary activity to other strategies such as crime reduction.
- ❖ Commented that there are a range of entrenched social problems that the Council has to address, including children in care, homelessness, youth unemployment or long-term health issues. The traditional models have failed to deliver the results needed to make inroads with these issues. Therefore, the Council is looking at Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) bring together the public, private and voluntary sectors to solve these challenges by having a clear and relentless focus upon delivering the desired outcomes and to make funding for services conditional on achieving results. Social Investors pay for the project at the start, and then receive payments based on the results achieved by the project. Therefore it would be logical for such Social Investors to be invite to scrutiny meetings to provide an opportunity for such projects to be subject to wider scrutiny.
- ❖ Commented that it was important to invest in community sport and that physical activity plays an important role in boosting the local economy and will provide an opportunity to help level up inequalities within the Borough, and build a healthier, happier, and more prosperous Tower Hamlets.
- ❖ Noted the anxieties of communities in regard to the Liveable Street Scheme which aims of the Scheme to produce safe streets, vibrant public spaces that connect people to the places where they live, work, but some residents feel that it may actually divide neighbourhoods, communities, and people. It was felt that a more transparent approach was needed around the consultations on the proposals to introduce

such schemes **e.g.** all residents should have a have a say in decisions that affect their communities.

- ❖ Commented that 2020-21 has seen an unprecedented and unforeseen growth in the digital and e-commerce sectors, which have been beneficial for council services. However, some have not capitalized on pandemic-induced shift to digital platforms due to persistent barriers.
- ❖ Noted that people may be digitally excluded for multiple reasons, including not having access to the required infrastructure and/or devices, lack of skills, or lack of motivation to use technology.
- ❖ Commented that the main factors that influence the digital divide in London include age, region, socioeconomic status and whether a person has a disability.
- ❖ Indicated that there have been particular concerns raised about the digital divide during the Covid-19 pandemic, as people have been more reliant on the internet to access services and health information and socialise with friends and family.
- ❖ Was concerned that digital exclusion may make it more difficult for adults to access support services, medical appointments, and welfare activities. Also those adults who do not have sufficient internet safety skills may be at higher risk of online harms such as misinformation, fraud, and computer viruses. In addition, digitally excluded people may not be able to use contact tracing apps and may experience negative health impacts. Therefore, finding ways to address the digital divide in the Borough has never been more important. As families that are unable to access the internet find themselves cut off from access to services, advice, and information, contact with loved ones and in the context of the pandemic, crucial education resources for their children.
- ❖ Noted that school closures and absences during COVID-19 have necessitated home-schooling and online distance learning. However, as not all children have access to the devices and internet connections they need support for remote schooling. Therefore, the Council is working with partner agencies to provide devices, good quality internet connection and training for parents. The aim being to prevent children with poor access to online learning falling further behind as home-schooling continues during the pandemic.
- ❖ Commented that Tower Hamlets has a very diverse population, and this is one of the Borough's strengths and it means that the Council needs to be at the forefront of the equality agenda. The Council has an integral role advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good community relations, and eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment. It also has a key role in enabling those who are disadvantaged to reach their full potential. Therefore, it was important to really look at and reflect on what is being done to accelerate the pace and scale of achievement to have a workforce that reflects the Borough's community. Especially increasing the proportion of (i) BAME staff overall in the workforce, to reflect the working age population of Tower Hamlets; (ii) BAME staff given fair opportunity to progress to managerial roles and particular senior management posts; (iii) of staff with disabilities overall and in senior management positions.

- ❖ Was reminded that the Council's equality policy sets out a clear commitment to ensure equality is at the heart of everything it does from the money it spends and the people they employ, to the services we provide. The policy applies to all aspects of the Council's functions including recruitment, employment, training, and development of staff
- ❖ Commented that diversity is one of the Borough's greatest strengths and the Council works with its partners to provide accessible and responsive services that enable it to improve outcomes for local people. Through ensuring the Council meets local needs helps to deliver value for money, improve customer services and reputation, and to enable the empowerment of local people to lead fulfilling lives.
- ❖ Observed that equality in Tower Hamlets is first and foremost addressed through the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan which sets out the strategic direction for the Council and its partners. Equality being embedded throughout this plan and is a key driver for everything the Council does.

In conclusion, the Chair:

Thanked Mayor Biggs and Will Tuckley for their presentation and that the key points the Committee considered included

1. The importance of reflecting on what is being done to accelerate the pace and scale of achievement to have a workforce that reflects the Borough's community.
2. What the Council is doing with partner agencies to provide good quality internet connection to ensure that children with poor access to online learning do not fall further behind as home-schooling continues during the pandemic.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

This report provides a summary of the work that Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), its sub-committees and scrutiny leads delivered in 2020-21 municipal year. The main points of the discussion and the question raised may be summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Agreed that benchmarking is an extremely effective tool for Members to observe, analyse and comment on performance over a given time frame. Benchmarks help Members to scrutinise the key performance drivers for the Council's contained within the Strategic Plan and how realistic are the objectives set out in that document. Therefore it was felt that it was important to (i) obtain such information in a timely manner; and (ii) follow up on the Executive reports and the action plans that do get created in response to Scrutiny reports to help in demonstrating the impact of the Committee.
- ❖ Discussed the importance of the culture shift within the Council that needs to happen around scrutiny so that the Council would be ready to

have discussions about those areas that are harder to investigate or to review or where problems might be arising and that the Scrutiny Process is properly valued.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Noted the attached Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21, comment and agree the report for submission to Full Council in the new municipal year; and
2. Authorises the Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance to amend the report following comments by the committee before submission to Full Council.

9. 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 28th of April 2021 (See attached appendix).

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

Nil items

11. ACTION LOG

Noted (See attached appendix).

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 19:23hrs

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

Overview & Scrutiny PDSQs 26.04.2021

Item 6.1 Strategic Plan 2021-24	
Questions	Response
1. When and how will targets for the Strategic Plan be created?	The council's target setting principles are set out in target setting guidance agreed as part of the Performance Management and Accountability Framework in August 2020. The approach adopted allows for sufficient flexibility so that we can take into account factors that may be affecting local government including the impact of the pandemic and expected budget constraints. The Mayor, Members and the Corporate Leadership will review and agree targets by 2 nd June 2021.
2. Page 8 - Tower Hamlets is now the densest Borough since mid-2019 see ONS - 16,427 people per square km - can this be corrected https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2019estimates	The statistic will be amended to reflect the most recent population estimates published in June 2020.
3. Page 9 - why have ASB rates not been added - we have highest in the country ?	The number of ASB reports is closely monitored by operational teams and at directorate level in the council. Number of cases of ASB reported per month is a key community safety operational performance metric and reported monthly at a divisional and directorate level. In 2020/21 there were 3,200 reports of ASB which is nearly double the number of reports in 2019/20 (1696). The number of ASB reported cases does not appear in the strategic plan as it is operational data. The metrics in the strategic plan are designed to report progress against our priority areas and outcomes, in other words, to measure if anyone is better off due to the work the council carries out. Outcome 7 is about resident perceptions about how ASB is being addressed and how safe they feel in their localities. Perceptions of the council and partner responses to ASB are included in Outcome 10 which focuses on the effectiveness of the council's partnership working.

Overview & Scrutiny PDSQs 26.04.2021

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<p>4. Page 9 - see Internal Report that suggests numbers on housing waiting list maybe materially overstated ? Can this be minuted?</p>	<p>The data in the report is a snapshot for the period to the end of 2019 and was the most up to date data available at the time of drafting the Strategic Plan. Recent internal reports may reflect more up to date data available to the service.</p>
<p>5. Page 9 - 2019 NOX Diffusion Tube results suggest that 40% is overstated - where does this stat come from?</p>	<p>There is an error with the 40% figure/box in the table – this is incorrect, with the 77% figure being correct – this will be amended for the final version. The data provided is from the London Atmospheric Emissions (LAEI) the key tools for air quality analysis and policy development in London. The most up to date data provided is for 2019.</p>
<p>6. Page 12 - where is additional COVID funding in this table?</p>	<p>Covid grant funding allocations are announced throughout the year and are not, therefore, included in the Council's medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) budget. The Council has, however, agreed to create a £3m Covid Recovery Fund using part of its New Homes Bonus grant in 2021-22. To date MHCLG has announced a 2021-22 Covid-19 expenditure pressures grant allocation of £12.985m and a part-year extension to the reimbursement scheme for lost sales, fees and charges income. Further announcements for Covid grant funding will be reported as part of the 2021-22 budget monitoring process.</p>
<p>Item 6.2 Tower Hamlets Plan Annual Report and priorities going forward</p>	
<p>1. Page 10 of 31 draws on data from 2017/18 – 2019/20. However, the infographics' data spans is inconsistent. For example, 77% of residents exposed to N02 levels that exceed the EU limit and 45.5% of children and young people accessing timely mental health support - refers to data from 2017/18 only. Can you clarify the reasons for the above?</p>	<p>1.1 The data provided is from the London Atmospheric Emissions (LAEI) the key tools for air quality analysis and policy development in London. The most up to date data provided is for 2019. The infographic will be amended to include reference the 2019-20 time period.</p> <p>1.2 Due to pressures resultant from the Covid-19 pandemic we are currently unable to obtain up to date, validated data for this measure due to partner (CCG) capacity reasons. We expect to be able to restart reporting against this measure once these capacity pressures ease. Unvalidated data available suggests more</p>

<p>2. As a measure of ‘the percentage residents exposed to N02 levels that exceed the EU limit’ and ‘children and young people accessing timely mental health support’ could you provide the context as to why there is not data available?</p>	<p>children and young people (1,278 children from April to October 2020) were accessing mental health services than projected for the period.</p> <p>Projections completed by the service in Q3 estimated that by 31st March, 2,527 children and young people would have accessed MH services which is in line with the target (35%) though currently we are unable to validate this figure to provide assurance.</p> <p>In 2019/20 2,072 children and young people with diagnosed mental health conditions accessed treatment. The annual performance target (34%) was exceeded.</p>
<p>3. Regarding the ‘% of clients using social care who receive self-directed support (up to 2014/15 also included carers) – Snapshots’. Please could you confirm further details of the Snapshot?</p>	<p>This figure is drawn from the Adult Social Care Outcome Framework (ASCOF) which all councils with Adult Social Care Commissioning Responsibilities have a statutory obligation to provide local data for. Figures are benchmarked at a regional and national level. The measure relates to how well our Adult Social Care (ASC) service is doing as regards a key duty in the Care Act 2014; to ensure that all service users in the community have their needs assessed and are informed that they have in place a direct payment or personal budget which has involved an assessment and support plan which is clear about the outcomes to be achieved and the funding allocated. In 2019/20 the national benchmark figure for this measure was 91.9% and 94.6% in the London region. In Tower Hamlets, performance on this measure had been lagging for the last few years compared to other councils. As part of our continuous improvement work, starting in 2019 we looked into the data and why our performance was below our peer authorities and put in place a plan to drive up performance. Much of this was about ensuring front line staff recorded data correctly on our systems so that this came through in our reported outcomes. Having delivered on our improvement plan our performance currently exceeds the national and regional benchmark levels.</p>

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<p>4. Measure of 'Number of affordable homes built' – could this include a breakdown of social and Tower Hamlets Living rent?</p>	<p>A breakdown of the number of affordable homes by rent product is available and can be included in the Annual Report.</p>
<p>5. As access to Food is such an important part of Better health and wellbeing could a key measure be included so that this work can be measured effectively?</p>	<p>The council currently is in receipt of DfE funding to support children at risk of food poverty during the school holidays. An additional measure will be added so that we can track the numbers of children benefiting from this funding during 2021/22.</p>
<p>6. Regarding the adoption of the NEL ICS Anchor Charter, to what extent are the Charter's ambitions around '2) Procurement for social value 3) Maximising the social value of our buildings and land', reflected in the Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25?</p>	<p>The Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25 has been in development with partners since winter 2019. The latest draft has emerged from a series of interviews, engagements and reviews of relevant data and strategies and is currently undergoing public consultation.</p> <p>Procurement for social value:</p> <p>While it is beyond its scope to address procurement more broadly, a priority of the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to work with employers across the borough (particular Small and Medium Enterprises) to improve the health of current employees and workplaces and to advise on tackling health inequalities. Additionally, one of the underlying principles of the strategy is to put equalities and anti-racism at the heart of everything we do, including in our working with partners, and organisations in the borough.</p> <p>Maximising the social value of our buildings and land:</p> <p>One of the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy's 5 Ambitions is that 'We can all access safe, social spaces near our homes'. This ambition and its underlying principles have significant overlap with the North East London Integrated Care System Anchor Charter's ambition. The principles and actions in the draft strategy relating to this ambition include working with residents in planning, design and development; strengthening communications and engagement with underserved</p>

	<p>communities, as well as empowering the views of children and young people to create sustainable change to the environment; and making use of unused open spaces;</p>
Item 6.3 Future of the Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Designation	
<p>1. What are the measures of success for this policy?</p>	<p>The scheme has enabled the Council to identify where the private rented properties are in this part of the Borough, this has been critical during the pandemic as we have been able to communicate with tenants and landlords directly in regard to protection against eviction. The scheme has also set the standard that landlords must achieve when renting out their property and informs the tenant who is responsible for managing their property. As of March 2021, the Selective Licensing scheme has achieved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties licensed: 8146 • Total number of visits and surveys undertaken: 3105 • Property conditions improved: 924 • Enforcement Notices served: 320 • Civil Penalty Notice fines issued: £83,374.27 • Prosecutions for failure to licence and Management Regs: 10 • Rent Repayment Orders (RRO) claimed: £91,000 from May 2019 to date in the Selective Licensing area only. <p>Total RROs for the whole borough (inc. SL area): Claimed: £210,125 (78 applicants) Claims filed and awaiting decision: £267,062 (61 applicants) Claims to be filed: Approx. £160,000 (50 applicants)</p>
<p>2. Can it be reiterated why this area focuses on Whitechapel, Spitalfields & Banglatown and Weavers wards?</p>	<p>Based on the Mayhew Report which reviewed ASB across the Council it was noted that these ward areas have the higher amounts of ASB which is one of the key criteria for introducing the scheme</p>

<p>3. Have other parts of the borough been considered for such a scheme?</p>	<p>Yes, as detailed in the Mayhew report in relation to ASB. However, the Additional Licensing Scheme, which captures all small HMOs, is currently in force throughout the rest of the borough.</p>
<p>Item 6.4 Proposal for the introduction of the borough wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to deal with the possession and use of psychoactive substances (e.g. nitrous oxide) and associated Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)</p>	
<p>1. When will the PSPO be legally enforceable from?</p>	<p>If Cabinet are minded, to make the Order, at the time of that decision the Order has come into force. We have planned for sufficient signage to be placed around the borough, particularly in those hotspot areas from 3rd May 2021 onwards. Once signage is in place, the order will become legally enforceable.</p>
<p>2. Have we ensured that every Met Police officer & THEO in Tower Hamlets is aware of the PSPO and is ready and able to issue FPN ?</p>	<p>The turnover of police officers that may be working within the Central East Basic Command Unit is high. Therefore the Council ensuring every Met Police Officer in the BCU is aware of the Order and able to issue an FPN is not practical. We have discussed the Order and enforcement of it with police partners. They have been consulted on the Order as part of the formal consultation. We have taken a targeted approach. We anticipate that the vast majority of enforcement by members of the MPS will be undertaken by Neighbourhood Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers, and our council funded police teams within LBTH & THH. As part of our commitment to enhance partnership working, and ensure a better overall service offer for our residents, we have committed to delivering regular bite-size workshops to ensure those neighbourhood police officers are fully versed with all council services, including the powers that exist within the (if the NOX PSPO is agreed) three PSPOs in the borough. All Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers are familiar with PSPO enforcement, have had regular training, are aware of the proposed introduction of this PSPO and already have what they need to enforce where appropriate.</p>

6.7 – GP Enhanced Public Health Services – Direct Award	
Public Health GP Enhanced Services – the contract awarded to Tower Hamlets GP Care Group is welcomed and they are active partners in Tower Hamlets Together. However, could the Council outline where and how the governance and oversight of the contract is undertaken by the TH Council directly, including quarterly monitoring?	Contract monitoring meetings are conducted quarterly between the Tower Hamlets Public Health and GP care group, attended by the associate director of Public Health and two Public Health programme leads (commissioners) and representatives from GP care group including clinical leadership (provider). In these meetings, the usual agenda items are quarterly performance report, finance/invoicing, contractual issues, staffing issues, risk log, action plan/recovery plan if underperformance. Moreover, the commissioners have access to the monthly/quarterly dashboards provided by clinical effectiveness group (CEG) which enables early identifications of issues or lower/higher activity.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Reference	Action	Assigned to	Scrutiny Lead	Due Date	Response
26/10 meeting	<p><u>1. Budget Monitor as at P5 for 2020/21</u> The Committee would require as part of the budget process in the next quarter a detailed breakdown of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid costs; • Recovery plans versus population vulnerability; and • What costs will not be reimbursed by Central Government. <p><u>2. Waste Service performance update</u> Next time, OSC wanted to see details of service improvement with particular reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in waste heading for reuse; street cleansing and bulk waste collections; • How it is now easier for people to report mis-collections through IT systems • How agency staff are used; and • Action plans for the West of the Borough e.g. Weavers; Spitalfields and Whitechapel. 	Kevin Bartle	OSC Chair		
		Dan Jones	OSC Chair & Scrutiny Lead for Env & Comm Safety	Next time this item returns to OSC	
23/11 meeting	<p><u>1. Strategic Performance Monitoring</u> Details on mitigation of poor performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of adults supported into employment by the WorkPath • Young people entering the youth justice system for the first time • Level of household recycling (quarterly audited) <p>In addition, that more detail should be provided within any future report</p> <p><u>2. COVID-19 update</u> OSC to review the Mayor's response to the Committee's COVID Review</p> <p><u>3. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Guide</u> Sought clarification on what OSC is able to do/act on as a part of the CCfA process</p>	Thorsten Dreyer			<p>1. PDSQs' responses provided before Cabinet on 25 Nov.</p> <p>2. OSC to provide comments to Chair</p> <p>3. Adam to work with Matthew Mannion to develop a communications approach for Members, including examples showing how</p>
		OSC members	OSC chair	Before next meeting	
		Adam Boey			

					and when to use CCfA.
<p>Page 28</p> <p>4/12 meeting</p>	<p>1. <u>COVID-19 Update</u> The committee requested clarification as to why E1 Health Centre and White Chapel Health Centre were exempt or not participating in the Vaccination 1st Wave Site for Tower Hamlets</p>	Dr Somen Banerjee	OSC Chair	Before next meeting	<p>The increase in costs was Covid related because the service accommodated 200 single homeless people into accommodation (mainly commercial hotels). For those who came in not all costs were recoverable from housing benefit. For example, provision of three meals a day and floating support in the commercial hotels to assist hotel management with supporting residents. Some residents were not entitled to benefits, so the cost of their accommodation was not recoverable. Furthermore, the nightly rate in the commercial hotels was above the eligible housing benefit amounts, so even for those who were entitled for housing benefit, the full cost was not recoverable.</p> <p>The Committee was provided (on 07.01.2021 the information via a briefing session which covered business rate reset. Business rates and council tax and Covid funding. Slides were circulated to O&S members and awaiting on the update slides for Covid funding.</p>
	<p>2. <u>WorkPath</u> To bring back and review WorkPath Services in next year's scrutiny WP</p>	Vicky Clark		OSCs next year WP date TBC	
	<p>3. <u>MTFS 2021 -24 (Budget Update)</u> The Committee requested more information on how and why temporary accommodation costs have arisen and the extent to which this is COVID and non COVID related?</p> <p>The Committee requested more information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Rates • Covid Gap • What support is available from Government • Council Tax Support <p>The Committee agreed to hold a session (prior to the budget scrutiny meeting) on understanding business rates reset</p>	Karen Swift	OSC Chair	Before next meeting	
	<p>4. <u>AOB</u> The Committee welcomed the Executives response to the Call in - Change the Band 3 policy but didn't change the PRS policy. OSC to delegate responsibility to Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee to review the PRS policy and implications for waiting list in 6 months' time</p>	Kevin Bartle	Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee	Before 11 Jan 2021 Budget Scrutiny Meeting	
07/01					The CTR caseload has increased from 29,268 in March

<p>Meeting</p>	<p><u>Business Rate Reset/ Council Tax Reset and Covid Funding briefing</u></p> <p>1. On the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the Committee sort for clarification on how much of the increase in the cost of the scheme was as a result of the decision to suspend the income floor for self-employed claimants as part of bringing in line with suspension of universal credit</p>	<p>Roger Jones</p>	<p>O&S Committee</p>	<p>By next Meeting.</p>	<p>2020 to currently 31,626, it was as high as 32,482 in May 2020. Overall, the cost of awarding CTR over the same period has increased from £27.9m to £31.4m. Some of this increase will be down to new claims and some will be down to changes in circumstances on existing claims such as and changes in income (an example of this would be the SEISS payments which will impact on self-employed claims) or changes to the number of people in the household.</p> <p>The DWP suspended the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) used in the assessment of Universal Credit (UC) in April 2020. Since March 2020 the number of CTR claims with Self Employed income has dropped from 857 to 838, but of these the number that are UC claims has increased from 443 to 573. All of these are no longer affected by the MIF.</p> <p>As a result of this the number of cases affected by the Council's MIF has decreased from 297 to 261 during the same period. Where we are advised that the MIF is causing hardship, we are looking at each case to assess whether S13a could be used to mitigate the effect of the MIF. To date this year, we have awarded £133,137.67 under Section 13a provisions to address the impact of the MIF being applied.</p> <p>We have had 358 applications so far and awarded in 213 cases and have a further 29 applications still being considered.</p> <p>We have also awarded £1.7m under the Hardship Fund to those who were assessed as still having something to pay.</p>
<p>11/01 meeting</p>	<p><u>Budget Scrutiny</u></p>	<p>Thorsten Dreyer</p>			<p>The published <u>Tower Hamlets Borough Profile</u> contains a dedicated section on population growth</p>

	<p>1. The Committee did not agree that population growth was reflected proportionately across all age groups. The committee were of the view that the biggest increase was amongst 20's 30's and 40's age group and not children and older people and want to understand the what the drivers are.</p> <p>2. The Committee requested to understand the mapping around other services that will be stepping in to provide the service provided by Support for Learning Services</p>	<p>James Thomas</p>	<p>OSC Chair</p>		<p>and change.</p> <p>Slides 7 and 8 provide an overview of population growth by age groups. The committee should note the distinction between increases in numbers and proportionate increase. While numbers in a group may have increased more in one group than another in absolute terms, the same may not be always true for the proportionate increase within each age groups.</p> <p>An example: The growth in 0-19 is higher as a proportion than the growth in adults as a proportion. The rate is higher in CYP so you would expect to see a proportionately larger increase in demand for their services even if the total demand for services in the 20 - 39 age group is bigger in absolute numbers.</p> <p>Slides 17 to 19 summarise the main factors driving population growth in the borough.</p> <p>The SLS will retain expertise in all of the areas of SEND that it currently has so will still be able to offer schools advice and training on speech and language, literacy, physical disabilities, assistive technology and to carry out its duties in relation to deaf and visually impaired children and young people.</p> <p>The Early Help Service works with the whole family and seeks to address the individual needs of every family member; the needs of individual family members are considered within the context of the broader family. Where there are children with specific needs including those children and Young People with SEND, the service will work with the family to address any concerns, advocating with schools and service providers as necessary ensuring that assessments are undertaken where necessary and appropriate. The Service will identify voluntary sector services who offer appropriate support and will sign post or refer as appropriate. The service has established relationships with the Parents Advice Centre, Children with Disabilities Team and the GP Care Group Social Prescribers who offer advice,</p>
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					<p>support and interventions specifically to families where there is a child/child with SEND.</p> <p>Strategic discussions will take place between the LA and health providers to ensure clear professional boundaries mean education and health services are appropriate and complementary. The following developments will also contribute to capacity which builds a more sustainable system over time, enabling schools to better meet their statutory duties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New guidance issued by LBTH in January 2021 (SEND threshold document) to support mainstream schools to meet the requirements of the SEN code of practice for children with different forms of SEND, inclusion specific requirements in the code for support for children with sensory impairments. This will be supported by THEP leadership consultants in their school improvement role with headteachers • Professional development for SENCOs now integrated into the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership middle leadership programme • Professional development offer for SEND inclusion for school staff and for governing bodies to be rolled out from the summer term 2021 to support schools to improve statutory compliance, meet Ofsted inspection requirements and best practice by implementing the guidance above • Creation of a new SEND Inclusion Adviser post tasked with support and oversight for inclusion in the borough's schools, ensuring implementation of the new guidance (above) and managing the SLS/LAS • Development of on-line SEND advice and guidance to improve awareness • Recruitment of a Rehabilitation Officer to support children and YP with visual impairment • Work with other services (including Early Help and the Children with Disabilities team) to ensure
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					<p>needs not requiring specialist teaching support are met for children with sensory impairments and their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development/training for council officers working with families of SI and PD, including Early Help, Area Inclusion Co-ordinators to improve support and sign-posting • Work with the local college provider to further develop support for SI pupils with sensory needs to enable pupils with SI needs do not need to leave the borough for post-16 education • Use of the Local Offer and SENCo training to signpost schools and parents to support for SPLD in assessing needs, support strategies and guidance • <i>Following a review of integrated therapies by health colleagues, commissioning of therapies will be increased, particularly Speech and Language Therapy, for those in nursery and primary school for the academic year beginning September 2021.</i> • Review the allocation of support within nationally recognised frameworks, informed by evidence of the educational effectiveness of the use of a range of approaches to support educational development such as group work which capitalises on the inclusion of children with SEND working with peers and using 1:1 interventions only when there is a clear educational benefit <p><i>Following the public consultation on the change of use of the High Needs Funding Block, 4 more posts (2 in HI, 2 in VI) were added back in to the structure to expand the level of statutory service provision. An increase in SI posts by 4 from the original staffing proposal</i></p>
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	<p>3. The Committee asked if the Children’s Long-Term Recovery Plan (went to DfE) can be shared because it provided context of the savings for Children</p> <p>4. The Committee requested to understand more detail of the capital borrowing fund and if the treasury management strategy could be shared</p>	<p>James Thomas</p> <p>Kevin Bartle</p>			<p>The document was shared with the OSC Members via Democratic Services on 22.01.2021</p> <p>The papers for this can be sourced from the Audit Committee 28.01.2021 here</p>
<p>Page 33</p> <p>25/01 meeting</p>	<p><u>ASB</u></p> <p>1. Service to report back to scrutiny in March regarding consultation results on a pragmatic approach to ASB linked to nitrous oxide.</p>	<p>Ann Corbett</p>	<p>OSC Chair</p>	<p>01.03.2021</p>	<p>This is the summary of the result of the public consultation on the proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order to prohibit the possession or use of psychoactive substances (including nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to members of the public.</p> <p>The consultation ran from 4th January 2021 and closed on the 15th of February 2021. It was widely publicised on the council’s website, social media feeds, community platforms such as Online Watch Link (OWL), Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF), Safer Neighbourhood Board, (SNB) and Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels.</p> <p>The consultation received 2584 visitors and 948 formal responses to the consultation, one of the highest responses for any consultation the council has undertaken.</p> <p>Of those 948 responses, 97.5% (924) were residents and overall, 93.7% (886) were in favour of introducing a PSPO. 89.4% (889) thought the PSPO should be</p>

	<p><u>Borough Commander Spotlight</u></p> <p>2. Borough Commander to provide demographic data on FPNs issued, and details on where money recovered goes</p>	<p>BC Marcus Barnett</p>		<p>01.03.2021</p>	<p>boroughwide and 88.5% (838) said they had witnesses nitrous oxide misuse and that it made them feel unsafe.</p> <p>The proposal is being progressed and is planned to be decided upon by cabinet in April.</p> <p>In relation to the demographic data on FPN's issued we sadly cannot break down the figures to show each individual Borough Command Unit or London Borough. The data is held centrally by the Metropolitan Police Service and the breakdown for London shows us that the large majority of the fines have been issued to young men from 18 to 30 years old: 16% Asian, 12% Black & 70% White. Gender: 77% male, 1% not specified and 22% female.</p> <p>Chief Inspector Pete Shaw has tried to find out what happens in regards to the money from the fines issued, however at this point we are not able to identify this specifically with the response from our central command team being that they believe it goes back to the government for it to then be redistributed however they feel suitable.</p>
<p>01/03 Meeting</p>	<p><u>Covid Update</u></p> <p>1. The Committee wants to understand the protocol or mitigation plans which will be in place for managing risk of Covid spikes (through social mixing) during the campaign period for and after the forthcoming election/referendum</p>	<p>Robert Curtis and Will Tuckley</p>	<p>O&S Committee Chair</p>	<p>22.03.2021</p>	<p>The risk assessments are being driven from the GLA with additional information relating to premises and staffing being added as part of our own project planning and risk assessments compiled for Will and associated Officers (See below).</p> <p>The issue with spikes, as we all know, is we can only prepare for the worst scenario with masks, provision of sanitiser, social distancing, ventilation, bubbles for staff, sneeze screens provided and appropriate training provided which will apply to the main three project areas namely postal vote opening, polling day and the count (GLA).</p> <p>In addition, GPC have and continue to be updated and all of the implications and scenarios are being discussed and addressed at the highest level through</p>

					<p>project boards both internal and external, where we are represented, along with advice from PHE, the Electoral Commission, Government (Cabinet Office) and the GLA.</p> <p>We are also liaising with our own Corporate Health & Safety (Tracey Gorbell) and Shuheda Uddin who is assisting us with the provision of PPE (Senior Commissioning Manager) In addition, I have also held a meeting with Rachel Buttrick and Andy Liggins and this will continue to be the case as we approach the official timetable.</p> <p>This is the responsibility of the Constituency Returning Officer (Althea Loderick - CEO Newham) who is the senior officer from the lead authority for the Constituency (City and East), Will Tuckley as Counting Officer for the Referendum and the Mary Harpley who is the Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) for the GLA all of whom are working closely together to get the precautions in place where considered necessary.</p>
	<p><u>Strategic Performance Q3 -2020/21</u></p> <p>2. The Committee wants to understand how the recycling rates and street cleaning performance is calculated</p>	<p>Thorsten Dreyer</p>		<p>22.03.2021</p>	<p>See attached Evidence Appendix 1/1b for this response provided 22.03.2021 meeting</p>
	<p><u>Budget Monitoring Report as at 31.12.2020 (period 9)</u></p> <p>3. The Committee wants more detail information on delivery target for Legal Service and modernisation of the registration service (as part of the savings tracker) and what this means</p>	<p>Janet Fasan</p> <p>Kathy Constantinou</p>		<p>26.04.2021</p> <p>26.04.2021</p>	<p>The £40k for Registrars is not a saving as such, but an increase in revenue for when we move to St. George's Town Hall. The move has been delayed several times, but it looks like it will go ahead by the Summer. The building is bigger than BPH which means we can hold more appointments and offer</p>

	<p>4. The Committee requests more detailed information on the HRA approved capital programme for period 9</p> <p>5. The Committee requests an explanation on why the Resources directorate has an overspend of £4.6m (indicated in the Cabinet Budget Monitoring report for period 9) for temporary accommodation, the basis of this overspend and why it has gone unnoticed for so long?</p>	<p>Hitesh Jolapara</p> <p>Karen Swift</p>		<p>22.03.2021</p>	<p>more ceremonies. At the moment, we are restricted to one ceremony room at BPH whereas SGTH has 2 ceremony rooms. We will be introducing wedding packages along with the basic ceremonies which will generate more money. We have also introduced a Genealogist post into our structure which was previously done by a registrar in between appointments and we were very limited as to how many applications we could accept and therefore directed applicants to our Head Office. This is a part time post which generates an average of £1,300 - £1,500 per month which we will look into increasing if the demand remains as high as it has been now that the public are aware we can offer same day applications and are not directing applicants to our Head Office. We will also be able to offer more private Citizenship ceremonies due to the bigger premises and these are offered at a premium fee and are very popular.</p> <p>See attached Appendix 2 for this response on 22.03.2021 meeting</p> <p>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</p>
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					<p>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.</p>
<p>Page 37</p> <p>18/03 Meeting</p>	<p><u>Call In</u></p> <p>1. Monitoring Officer to detail the reasons for decision to Invalidate the call-in requisition regarding Cabinet’s decision: Bow Bus Gateway and time closure exemptions consideration taken on 03.03.2021</p>	<p>Janet Fasan</p>		<p>24.03.2021</p>	<p>Further to the meeting of O and S on the of March18th and your request for a note, please see below my considerations in respect of the above Call in request.</p> <p>Under paragraph 53 of the council’s constitution, <i>‘decisions will come into force, and may then be implemented at 5pm on the fifth clear working day, after the publication of the decision unless, after receiving a written request to do so, the Monitoring Officer calls the decision in’.</i></p> <p>Paragraph 55 provides that:</p> <p><i>During that period, the Monitoring Officer shall call-in a decision for scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if so requested by:</i></p> <p><i>(a) Not fewer than five Members of the Council; or</i></p> <p><i>(b) Two voting church, faith or parent governor representative in respect of any education matters only;</i></p> <p><i>(c) The request for a call-in must give reasons in writing and outline an alternative course of action.</i></p> <p><i>In particular, the request must state whether or not those Members believe that the decision is outside the policy or budget framework.</i></p> <p>To constitute a valid Call in request the above requirements (a) or (b) must be met and C. Also as per para 53 above the call in must relate to a prior</p>

					<p>decision that was made in the stipulated time frame.</p> <p>The Call in request did not give reasons or alternative actions that were referable to the decisions that were made on the 3rd of March and/or gave reasons and alternative options that were referable to an earlier decision on the bus gates that was taken on the 25th of November 2020. Please see table below which sets out the decisions of the 3rd March and the reasons/alternatives that were provided.</p> <p>A request was made to Cllr Wood to address the above by close of play on Monday the 15th March, however, his response did not advance matters. In a subsequent email dated 16th March, the Monitoring officer's concerns were reiterated. The email included her suggestions as to how matters may be taken forward by a different route.</p> <p>See Appendix 3 for more details</p>
<p>22/03 Meeting</p>	<p><u>New Town Hall</u> 1. To provide the Committee with further details on the updated financial business case for the New Town Hall.</p> <p>PDSQ</p>	<p>Ann Sutcliffe and Yasmin Ali</p>		<p>26.04.2021</p>	<p>A business case refresh is being carried out by the team and this will be available as a draft for Finance teams' consideration by the end of April. This will then be approved and presented to the Town Hall Project Board ahead of any further discussion, internally or externally subject to commercial sensitivity considerations. An update on the timeline for the business case refresh can be made available at the end of May 2021.</p> <p>07.05.21 Update: The council is still finalising the new Town Hall business case refresh draft and have been slightly delayed in collating all the information required, The Council is looking to receive this for by mid- May for first review, then follow on through the governance process as mentioned below.</p>

	<p>2. What is the ethnic make-up of Tower Hamlets Council staff at a managerial level</p> <p><u>Budget Monitoring as at 31.12.2020 (period 9) follow up:</u></p> <p>3. The Committee wants more information on HRA Approve Capital Programme -projected overspend - full breakdown of budget against each capital programme projects for consideration</p> <p>4. A copy of the Savills report which was cited in the MTFs.</p>	<p>Amanda Marcus</p> <p>Jane Abraham</p> <p>Rupert Brandon</p>		<p>26.04.2021</p> <p>26.04.2021</p>	<p>This has been shared offline with Members, this information is not for sharing publicly and as part of OSC work Programme for 21-22 it may be useful to organise a challenge session to discuss and understand better how strengthen our workforce diversity'</p> <p>Service update: This information has not been to Cabinet once it's been to Cabinet in June 21 will be provided to OSC'.</p>
<p>Page 39</p> <p>26/ 04 Meeting</p>					

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THE FORWARD PLAN

Published: 27 April 2021

Contact Matthew Mannion
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The Forward Plan is published 28 days before each Cabinet meeting.

In addition, new issues and changes to existing issues will be published on the website as soon as they are known.

The web pages also contain past Forward Plans and publication deadlines for future Plans. To visit the web pages go to <http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>.

Tower Hamlets Council **Forthcoming Decisions Plan**

What is this document?

The Forthcoming Decisions Plan (or 'Forward Plan') contains information on significant decisions that the Council expects to take over the next few months.

As a minimum this will include notice of:

- All Key Decisions to be taken by the Mayor or Cabinet.
 - This could include decisions taken at public meetings or taken individually at other times.
- Budget and Policy Framework Decisions (for example the Budget Report itself and major policies to be agreed by Council as set out in the Constitution)

In addition the Council aims to publish all other decisions to be taken by the Mayor and/or Cabinet.

Key Decisions

The Council is required to publish notice of all key decisions at least 28 days before they are taken by the Executive. Key decisions are all those decisions which involve major spending, or savings, or which have a significant impact on the local community. The precise definition of a key decision adopted by Tower Hamlets is contained in Section 3 of the [Constitution](#). Key Decisions can be taken by the Mayor, the Mayor in Cabinet or an officer if it has been expressly delegated.

Publication of Forthcoming Decisions

Individual notices of new Key Decisions will be published on the website as they are known on the 'Forthcoming Decisions' page, whilst this 'Forthcoming Decisions Plan' collating these decisions will be published regularly, as a minimum at least, 28 days before each Cabinet meeting. The Plan will be published on the Council's website and will also be available to view at the Town Hall and Libraries, Ideas Centres and One Stop Shops if required.

Urgency

If, due to reasons of urgency, a Key Decision has to be taken where 28 days' notice have not been given. Notice will be published (on the website) as early as possible and Urgency Procedures as set out in the Constitution have to be followed.

Make your views known

The most effective way for the public to make their views known about a Forthcoming Decisions is to contact the lead officer, or Cabinet Member (where stated), listed. You can also view the Council's [Consultation Calendar](#), which lists all the issues on which the Council and its partners are consulting.

Information about the Decision Makers

Further information on the Mayor and Members of the Cabinet can be found on the Council's [website](#).

Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

The Council is also required to give at least 28 days' notice if it wishes to consider any of the reports on the agenda of an Executive meeting (such as Cabinet) in private session. The last row of each item below will indicate any proposal to consider that item in private session. Should you wish to make any representations in relation to item being considered in private please contact Democratic Services on the contact details listed on the front page.

The notice may reference a paragraph of Section 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act. In summary those paragraphs refer to the following types of exempt information (more information is available in the Constitution):

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority handling the information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:-
 - a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Contact Details for this Plan

Contact: Matthew Mannion
Officer: Head of Democratic Services
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Telephone: 020 7364 4651

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Title of Report	Annual Council Performance & Delivery Report 2020/21	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report provides the Mayor in Cabinet with an update on delivery of the council's Strategic Plan in 2020/21.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 30/06/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A None - this is a performance and delivery update		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Proposal for the introduction of a Borough Wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to restrict individuals who ingest, inhale, inject, smoke, possess or otherwise use psychoactive substances (e.g. nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to c	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	The consultation exercise relating to the extension of the responsible drinking Public Spaces Protection Order resulted in a significant number of residents'		

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	<p>requesting a variation to the order to include the possession and use of nitrous oxide canisters which is not offence contained within the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.</p> <p>Following initial feedback so far, this proposal has been amended to restrict individuals who ingest, inhale, inject, smoke, possess or otherwise use psychoactive substances (e.g. nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to members of the public.</p> <p>It was not possible to include a variation at the time but as a result of analysis there appears to be an evidence base to consider the introduction of a PSPO. An extensive consultation exercise will follow to determine whether a PSPO including determining the wording of the prohibition is necessary and the geographical boundaries within the borough to which the PSPO if introduced will apply.</p>
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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Internally – Public Health, Substance Misuse Services, Neighbourhood Operations and Management. Clean and Green, Parks and Open Spaces, Trading Standards, Town Centre Team, ward councillors.</p> <p>Externally – MOPAC, Police, Safer Neighbourhood Board, Tower Hamlets Homes, Popla Harca and other Registered Providers, Neighbourhood Watch, Ward Panels and residents, London Boroughs of Hackney and Newham, City of London Corporation, third sector providers including Safe East, Spotlight, RESET and Osmani Trust</p> <p>Council's online consultation platform, council's community safety website, ward councillors, ward panels, Neighbourhood Watch 'OWL', Community Safety Newsletter, Bangla e-newsletter</p>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, will be completed as part of the report
Contact details for comments or additional information	Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety) ann.corbett@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	NA
Is there an intention to	No, Unrestricted

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consider this report in private session and if so why?			
Title of Report	Strategic Plan 2021-24	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	To approve the Council's Strategic Plan for 2021-24		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21		
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities		
Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None None		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Draft 2021-24 Strategic Plan		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Future of the Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Designation	Ward Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers; Whitechapel	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	To consider the future of the current Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Scheme within the pre 2014 wards of Weavers, Whitechapel, Spitalfields and Banglatown in light of its achievements to date, an independent review of the Scheme and the subsequent wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders		

Decision maker	Cabinet
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Date of decision	28/04/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	A public consultation with landlords, renters, letting agents, blue light services, Members Statutory consultation completed		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dan Jones, David Tolley (Divisional Director, Public Realm) dan.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards) david.tolley@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report on outcome of the stage one consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report presents the outcome of the stage one public consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School, to establish a three form entry 3-11 primary school, with 60 FTE Nursery, from January 2022.</p> <p>The report explains the background and reasons for the stage one consultation; the responses received with the views of parents, pupils, staff and the general public. Its purpose is to enable the Mayor in cabinet to decide whether or not the council should proceed to stage two of the process, which would be to issue a formal statutory notice informing of the intention for the two schools to amalgamate by 1 April 2022.</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21		
Community Plan Theme	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills		
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>The following stakeholders have been invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, community groups, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union, local Members of Parliament.</p> <p>Following the decision by DLT on 25 January 2021, a stage one public consultation was held between February and March 2021, the feedback from this has informed this report to cabinet and the recommendations herein. If a decision to publish a statutory notice and proposal is taken by cabinet, there is a statutory requirement for a further four week period of representation. This would run from June 2021 to July 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders will have the opportunity to send objections or comments to the council.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one consultation feedback • Equalities Impact Assessment • Stage one consultation document and response form • Council's Schools HR Organisational Change Procedure • Draft Statutory Notice 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report provides the findings and recommendations from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission which undertook evidence gathering between Sept – December 2020		

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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	A range of borough stakeholders The Commission gathered information through witnesses, written submissions and focus groups		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No as this report examines inequalities faced by BAME communities		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Commission evidence gathering sessions		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	GP Enhanced Public Health Services – Direct Award	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	<p>The purpose of the report is to recommend a direct award to the Tower Hamlets GP Care Group of a contract for the delivery of statutory and core public health services – sexual health and contraception, substance misuse and NHS health checks.</p> <p>The Tower Hamlets GP Care Group CIC is the umbrella organisation for the GP practices in the borough. Delivery of the services through the GP Care Group enables joined up service delivery across all the primary care networks in the borough.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing		

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Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	NA None
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	NO
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dr Somen Banerjee (Director of Public Health) somen.banerjee@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	NONE
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted
Title of Report	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
	Ward All Wards
	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	The Council does not have an agreed procedure for Passthrough - granting Contractors Admitted Body Status to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Pension Fund. To date this has been done on a case by case basis. It is good practice to have a standard agreed Policy in place to provide certainty for all impacted organizations. This is not the norm. If the Council may opt to outsource some of its functions, ensuring that employees of the Council who TUPE across to contractors receive the same pension protection on TUPE is key.

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this	Internal None identified at this stage

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consultation take place	
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional information	Hitesh Jolapara (Interim Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit) hitesh.jolapara@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted
Title of Report	Liveable Streets Bethnal Green - Warner Place/Squirries Street
	Ward Weavers
	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This item seeks a decision on the next stages of the measures for Warner Place and Squirries St and the junction between on Gosset St which is part of the Liveable Streets project in Bethnal Green

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Environment
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	Public Key partners Other Directorates As part of the project, a four-week consultation was held in October to November 2019
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, the EqIA has been updated based on the results of the consultation and recommendations. The EqIA will be updated as detailed design progresses
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dan Jones (Divisional Director, Public Realm) dan.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk

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What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendices included in the report pack		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Liveable Streets Brick Lane consultation outcome report	Ward Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This item presents the results of the Brick Lane Liveable Streets project which was taken to public consultation on 17 March until 14 April 2021.</p> <p>This item seeks a decision on the next stages of the Liveable Streets project in Brick Lane</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Environment
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Public Key partners Other Directorates</p> <p>Four-week public consultation with the residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the Brick Lane Liveable Streets area.</p> <p>Consultation documents with paper survey were sent out to everyone within the consultation area, as well as hosting a survey online.</p> <p>Queries were responded to via a dedicated email address, phone line, chat forum on Talk Tower Hamlets site</p>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, the EqIA has been updated based on the results of the consultation and recommendations. The EqIA will be updated as detailed design progresses
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dan Jones (Divisional Director, Public Realm) dan.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting	Appendices included in the report pack

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documents or other information will be available?			
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Covid Recovery Fund	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This reports sets out proposal to establish a Covid Recovery Fund which will support our community to recover from the impact of the pandemic and deliver a range of initiatives to support this.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Mayor, Statutory Deputy Mayor for Community Safety, Faith and Equalities		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A N/A		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Contracts Forward Plan 2021/22 – Quarter One	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This report presents the contracts being procured during quarter one. The report also sets out the Contracts Forward Plan at Appendix 2 to the report. 2. The report asks for confirmation that all contracts can proceed to contract		

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	award after tender
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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/07/21		
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	As above Necessary consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the council's policies and procedures. Where required, consultation with service users and stakeholders will be undertaken as part of the project and budget approval process		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No. Contact specific EQIA is expected to be completed by respective contract owners as part of the Directorate approval		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Hitesh Jolapara (Interim Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit) hitesh.jolapara@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Report and appendices include details of all contracts to be awarded		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020-21	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report describes what the Board has done over 2020-21 to achieve its main objectives in tackling adult abuse and neglect. It provides information on safeguarding activity and the achievements of the Board, sub-groups and partner agencies. It gives an overview of safeguarding adult reviews published over 2020-21 and learning from these.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/07/21
Community Plan	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to

Forward Plan April 2021

Theme	opportunities		
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	NA		
	NA		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Shohel Ahmed, Claudia Brown (Joint Safeguarding Adults Strategy and Governance Manager) Shohel.Ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director of Adults Social Care) Claudia.Brown@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	n/a – the report will consist of a covering report and the Annual Report as Appendix I.		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	2021 Local Account – Adult Social Care	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	The 2021 Local Account sets out the quality and performance of adult social care services over the last year and sets out our future plans and priorities for the coming year.		

Decision maker	Cabinet		
Date of decision	28/07/21		
Community Plan Theme	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities		
Cabinet Member			
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None		
	None		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this	No		

Forward Plan April 2021

Assessment?	
Contact details for comments or additional information	Claudia Brown, Joanne Starkie (Divisional Director of Adults Social Care) Claudia.Brown@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Head of Strategy and Policy - Health Adults and Communities) Joanne.Starkie@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	n/a – the report will consist of a covering report and the Local Account as Appendix I.
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted
Title of Report	Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2020-21
	Ward All Wards
	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	The report demonstrates the activity of the Tower Hamlets Children's Partnership within the last financial year. Which includes the setting of priorities, sub-groups, data sharing and the impact on children within the borough.

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/07/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None None
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional information	Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director, Children's Social Care) richard.baldwin@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	NA
Is there an intention to consider this report in	No, Unrestricted

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private session and if so why?			
Title of Report	Revised LIF Programme Implementation 2020/21-2022/23	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	The report sets out the revised Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) programme implementation arrangements for the years 2020/21 – 22/23 for approval.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/07/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A N/A		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	N/A		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Jennifer Peters (Divisional Director, Planning and Building Control, Place) Jennifer.Peters@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	LIF Programme 3 Allocations Report		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report on outcome of the stage one consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School Report on outcome of the stage one consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No

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	Nursery a		
Summary of Decision	<p>Description – or Summary of the Item: (this information will be made public)</p> <p>[Note for DL – please copy to ‘Description’ Field in online system] This report presents the outcome of the stage one public consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School, to establish a three form entry 3-11 primary school, with 60 FTE Nursery, from 1 January 2022.</p> <p>The report explains the background and reasons for the stage one consultation; the responses received with the views of parents, pupils, staff and the general public. Its purpose is to enable the Mayor in cabinet to decide whether or not the council should proceed to stage two of the process, which would be to issue a formal statutory notice informing of the intention for the two schools to amalgamate from 1 January 2022.</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer’s recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>The following stakeholders have been invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, community groups, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union, local Members of Parliament.</p> <p>Following the decision by DLT on 25 January 2021, a stage one public consultation was held between 8 February and 19 March 2021, the feedback from this consultation has informed this report to cabinet and the recommendations herein.</p> <p>If a decision to publish a statutory notice and proposal is taken by cabinet, there is a statutory requirement for a further four week period of representation. This would run from May 2021 to June 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders will have the opportunity to send objections or comments to the council.</p>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes

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Contact details for comments or additional information	Pauline Maddison (Interim Director, Education and Partnerships) pauline.maddison@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one consultation feedback • Equalities Impact Assessment • Stage one consultation document and response form • Council's Schools HR Organisational Change Procedure • Draft Statutory Notice 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report on outcome of the stage one consultation on the proposal to establish an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) provision at Hermitage Primary School.	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report presents the outcome of the stage one consultation, and the public representations received in response to the proposal to establish an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) provision at Hermitage Primary School</p> <p>The report explains the background and reasons for the stage one consultation; the responses received with the views of parents, pupils, staff and the general public. Its purpose is to enable the Mayor in cabinet to decide whether or not the council should proceed to stage two of the process, which would be to issue a formal statutory notice informing of the intention for the establishment of an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) provision at Hermitage Primary School from 1 September 2021.</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	The following stakeholders have been invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, community groups, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union, local

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	<p>Members of Parliament.</p> <p>A stage one public consultation was held between 15th February and 19th March. The feedback from this has informed this report to cabinet and the recommendations herein.</p> <p>If a decision to publish a statutory notice is taken by Cabinet, there is a statutory requirement for a further four week period of representation. This would run from May to June 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders will have the chance to send objections or comments to the Council.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	<p>Pauline Maddison (Interim Director, Education and Partnerships) pauline.maddison@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p>		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one consultation feedback • Draft Statutory Notice • Equalities Impact Assessment • Stage one consultation document and response form • Copies of all responses to the public consultation 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Tower Hamlets Plan Annual Report and priorities going forward	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	<p>An update of progress made against the Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-2023. This item outlines what has been achieved in the last 18 months by the Tower Hamlets Partnership and highlights the work undertaken to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also outlines the priorities going forward.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities
Cabinet Member	Mayor
Who will be consulted before decision is made	The Mayor, Other Directorates, Key Partners (PEG), partnership officers

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and how will this consultation take place	Key officers and thematic board members have contributed to the development of the report, with the Mayor, other directorates and Corporate Directors reviewing versions of the document at a variety of stages until the final report is complete.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	The Equality Impact Assessment is being completed as part of the drafting process and will be finalised before draft report goes to CLT		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	The Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-2023		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Liveable Streets Old Ford Road West consultation outcome report	Ward Bethnal Green; St Peter's	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This item presents the results of the Old Ford Road West Liveable Streets project which was taken to public consultation on Thursday 19 November until Sunday 20 December 2020.</p> <p>This item seeks a decision on the next stages of the Liveable Streets project in Old Ford Road West.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Environment, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Public Realm
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Public Key Partners Other Directorates</p> <p>Four-week public consultation with the residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the Old Ford Road West Liveable Streets area.</p>

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	<p>Consultation documents with paper survey were sent out to everyone within the consultation area, as well as hosting a survey online.</p> <p>Queries were responded to via a dedicated email address, phone line, chat forum on Talk Tower Hamlets site.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, the EqIA has been updated based on the results of the consultation and recommendations. The EqIA will be updated as detailed design progresses.		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dan Jones (Divisional Director, Public Realm) dan.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report and Recommendations following Housing Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-committee Challenge session on 2nd March 2020 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This item submits the report and recommendations of the Housing and Regeneration Overview Scrutiny Sub-committee challenge session and the recommendations arising from the session for implementation.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A N/A
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been	N/A

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carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?			
Contact details for comments or additional information	Karen Swift (Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration) Karen.Swift@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendix 1: Report of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'. Appendix 2: Action Plan arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on challenge session		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Response to Overview and Scrutiny's Challenge Session on 'Examining Council's Revised Approach to Idea Stores and Library Services	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report formalises the service's response to the overview and scrutiny's challenge session recommendations on the council's revised approach to Idea stores and library services. In practice the challenge session formed part of the consultation process that fed into the final report on the revised approach to Idea Stores taken to cabinet on 3rd March 21		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 30/06/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	See report taken to cabinet on 3rd March for full details of this See report taken to cabinet on 3rd March for full details of this
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sergio Dogliani, Teresa Heaney Deputy Head of Idea Store, (Interim Customer Services Programme Director) teresa.heaney@towerhamlets.gov.uk

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What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendix 1: Overview and Scrutiny Challenge Session Report on 'Examining the council's approach to Idea Stores and Library Services' Appendix 2: Service Action Plan (Response to Scrutiny Recommendations)
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted

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Non-Executive Report of the: Overview and Scrutiny Committee 24 th May, 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: David Knight, Principal Committee Services Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Scrutiny Arrangements - Appointment of Scrutiny Lead Members and Establishment of Sub-Committees for 2021-22	

Originating Officer(s)	David Knight, Democratic Services Officer Afazul Hoque, Head of Strategy and Policy, Resources and Governance
Wards affected	All Wards

Summary

This report requests that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC):

- Appoints a Vice Chair of the Committee;
- Agree the appointment of committee councillor members to five scrutiny lead member roles; and
- Agree the establishment, membership and terms of reference of three scrutiny sub-committees:

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Appoint a Vice Chair of the Committee;
2. Appoint Members to the scrutiny lead roles as set out in paragraph 3.2 of this report;
3. Establish the scrutiny sub-committees as set out in paragraph 3.5 of this report;
4. Approve the nominations for members for the scrutiny sub-committees as set out in Appendix 1 to this report;
5. Note the terms of reference of the OSC and agree the terms of reference for the scrutiny sub committees as set out in Appendix 2 to this report; and
6. Note the co-option requirements for education in accordance with legislation, as set out at Paragraphs 3.8 to 3.13 of this report and the wider co-option arrangements for scrutiny at Tower Hamlets, as set out in paragraph 3.14;

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's rules of procedure state that it will make a series of appointments to sub committee and lead member roles each municipal year.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee could determine different arrangements for carrying out the Scrutiny of the Council's executive decision making functions providing that all statutory requirements were met.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 At its first meeting of the municipal year, the OSC are asked to approve its arrangements for Lead Scrutiny Members and Sub-Committees.

Scrutiny Lead Members and Portfolios

- 3.2 The OSC Procedure rules state that the committee will select from among its Councillor Members lead Scrutiny Members, one for each of the following portfolios. It is therefore suggested that the OSC selects a councillor to fill each the following roles:

1. Scrutiny Lead for Health & Adults (who will chair of the Health & Adults scrutiny sub committee);
2. Scrutiny Lead for Children & Education (who will chair of the Children & Education scrutiny sub committee);
3. Scrutiny Lead for Housing & Regeneration (who will chair of the Housing & Regeneration scrutiny sub committee);
4. Scrutiny Lead for Resources & Finance; and
5. Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety & Environment.

- 3.3 Portfolios for each of the above roles are set out at Appendix 3 to this report.

Scrutiny Sub-Committee arrangements

- 3.4 At its meeting on 23 April 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered a report titled 'Scrutiny Structure' providing feedback from the Scrutiny Away Day on 16 March 2019 and allowing for a discussion on the best arrangements of Scrutiny Sub-Committees to allow the most effective oversight of the Council's actions with the available resources.

- 3.5 Following discussion at that meeting it was agreed to establish three Scrutiny Sub-Committees covering the following areas:

- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee;
- Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee; and
- Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

- 3.6 The current Terms of Reference for the three sub-committees are set out in Appendix 2 to the report for agreement, alongside those for the main Committee, which are for noting.
- 3.7 The Committee is asked to nominate councillors from amongst its membership to seats on the sub committees, the number of which are based the current terms of reference for each body. A proposed list of nominees is attached at Appendix 1 of this report.

Co-option of Representatives to Scrutiny

- 3.8 Section 9FA (4) of the Local Government Act 2000 provides that a committee of a local Council may include persons who are not members of the Council. This provision empowers, rather than obliges (excepting the requirement at 3.5 below), local authorities to have co-opted members on their overview and scrutiny committees.
- 3.9 However Schedule A1 to the Local Government Act 2000 also has effect in relation to the Council's executive arrangements. Paragraph 7 of Schedule A1 makes provision for the relevant committee to have church representatives as follows:
- 3.10 The Council must have a Church of England co-opted member on an overview and scrutiny committee if that committee's functions relate wholly or partly to education functions, and if the Council maintains one or more Church of England Schools (which is the case in Tower Hamlets). The Church of England representative must be nominated by the Diocesan Board of Education for any Church of England diocese which falls wholly or partly in Tower Hamlets.
- 3.11 Similarly, the Council must have a Roman Catholic representative on that overview and scrutiny committee if the committee's functions relate wholly or partly to education functions and if the Council maintains one or more Roman Catholic schools (which is the case in Tower Hamlets). The Roman Catholic representative must be a nominated by the bishop of any Roman Catholic diocese which falls wholly or partly in Tower Hamlets.
- 3.12 Paragraph 8 of Schedule A1 to the Local Government Act 2000 sets out the power for the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring local authorities to have representatives of parent governors at maintained schools included on their overview and scrutiny committees. The Secretary of State has made the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001. Regulation 3 provides that a local education Council shall appoint at least two, but not more than five, parent governor representatives to any overview and scrutiny committee that has functions which relate wholly or partly to any

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education functions which are the responsibility of the Council's executive. The Regulations specify the process for electing representatives.

- 3.13 The OSC is requested to note the co-option of nominated representatives in respect of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee as set out in the table below.

Role	Co-Optee
Church of England Diocese representative	Dr Phillip Rice
Roman Catholic Diocese representative	Joanna Hannan
Parent Governor representative	Vacant
Parent Governor representative	Neil Cunningham
Parent Governor representative	Ahmed Hussain
Muslim Community Representative (non-voting)	Vacant

- 3.14 Further to the general provision to appoint co-optees as set out above, the Committee has also agreed to the following co-optee appointments:
- OSC has two co-opted resident representative members, Halima Islam and James Wilson;
 - Housing and Regeneration scrutiny sub-committee has two co-opted members: a leaseholder representative, Moshin Hamim, and a tenant representative, Anne Ambrose).
 - Health and Adults scrutiny sub-committee has two co-opted members Sue Kenten and David Burbidge (who is a representative from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets).

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendix

- **Appendix 1** - Appointment to Scrutiny Sub-Committees – **To follow**
- **Appendix 2** - Terms of Reference
- **Appendix 3** – Scrutiny Lead Member Portfolios
- **Appendix 4** - Calendar of meeting 2021/22

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

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List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

- N/A

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**Labour Group – scrutiny sub-committee allocations
May 2021**

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Clr Amina Ali
Clr Ehtasham Haque (Chair)
Clr Helal Uddin
Clr Marc Francis
Clr Victoria Obaze

Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Clr Denise Jones
Clr Faroque Ahmed
Clr Gabriela Salva Macallan (Chair)
Clr Puru Miah
Clr Shah Ameen

Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Clr Abdal Ullah
Clr Bex White (Chair)
Clr Gabriela Salva Macallan
Clr Helal Uddin
Clr Shad Chowdhury
Clr Victoria Obaze

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Part B – Responsibility for Functions and Decision-Making Procedures

Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

<p>Summary Description: The Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee has been established to scrutinise the provision, planning and management of children and young people’s services – including children’s social care; safeguarding children; children in care; SEN and education inclusion, troubled families and the Youth Offending Service (YOS) education, learning and schools; youth services; early years; education capital estate and youth & play services.</p>	
<p>Membership: 6 non-executive councillors – the chair and five councillors; and 6 co-opted members (consisting of: - a Church of England and a Roman Catholic representative; 3 Parent Governor representatives under paragraph 7 of Schedule A1 to the Local Government Act 2000; and a Muslim faith representative).</p>	
Functions	Delegation of Functions
1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council’s children social care and education functions;	None
2. Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to children and education reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet;	None
3. Making reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of children and education functions;	None
4. Delivering (3) by organising an annual work programme, drawing on the knowledge and priorities of the Council, registered providers, and other stakeholders, that will identify relevant topics or issues that can be properly scrutinised;	None
5. Holding service providers to account, where recent performance fails to meet the recognised standard, by looking at relevant evidence and make recommendations for service improvements;	None
6. Considering children and education matters affecting the area or its inhabitants, including where these matters have been brought to the attention of the sub-committee by tenant and resident associations, or members of the general public; and	None
7. The sub-committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work.	None
<p>Quorum: Three voting Members</p>	
<p>Additional Information: Is contained in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Part A Section 9 (Overview and Scrutiny) • Constitution Part B Section 30 (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules) • Constitution Part D Section 53 (Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee Procedure Rules) 	

Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee

<p>Summary Description: The Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee has been established to undertake the Council's responsibilities in respect of Scrutinising local health services and adult social care, covering services provided by the Council as well as those provided by the Council's partners.</p>	
<p>Membership: 6 non-executive councillors – the chair and five councillors.</p> <p>Two non-voting Co-Optees may also be appointed.</p>	
Functions	Delegation of Functions
1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's health and adult social care functions	None
2. Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to health and adult social care reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet	None
3. Making reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of health and adult social care functions	None
4. Delivering (3) by organising an annual work programme, drawing on the knowledge and priorities of the Council, registered providers, and other stakeholders, that will identify relevant topics or issues that can be properly scrutinised	None
5. Holding service providers to account, where recent performance fails to meet the recognised standard, by looking at relevant evidence and make recommendations for service improvements	None
6. Considering health and adult social care matters affecting the area or its inhabitants, including where these matters have been brought to the attention of the sub-committee by tenant and resident associations, or members of the general public	None
7. The sub-committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work	None
8. To discharge the Council's Scrutiny functions under the National Health Service Act 2006 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013. Including to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and scrutinise matters relating to the health service within the Council's area and make reports and recommendations in accordance with any regulations made thereunder. • Respond to consultation exercises undertaken by an NHS body; and • Question appropriate officers of local NHS bodies in relation to the policies adopted and the provision of services. 	None

Quorum: Three voting Members

Additional Information: Is contained in:

- Constitution Part A Section 9 (Overview and Scrutiny)
- Constitution Part B Section 30 (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules)
- Constitution Part D Section 53 (Health and Adults Sub-Committee Procedure Rules)

Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee

<p>Summary Description: The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee will undertake overview and scrutiny pertaining to housing management and planning matters, as well as regeneration strategy and sustainability, including economic development, regeneration, and inequality; and employment strategy and initiatives and skills development.</p>	
<p>Membership: 6 non-executive councillors – the chair and five councillors</p> <p>Two non-voting Co-Optees may also be appointed,</p>	
<p>Functions</p>	<p>Delegation of Functions</p>
<p>1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's housing and regeneration functions;</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>2. Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to housing and regeneration reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet;</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>3. Making reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of housing and regeneration functions;</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>4. Delivering (3) by organising an annual work programme, drawing on the knowledge and priorities of the Council, registered providers, and other stakeholders, that will identify relevant topics or issues that can be properly scrutinised;</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>5. Holding service providers to account, where recent performance fails to meet the recognised standard, by looking at relevant evidence and make recommendations for service improvements;</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>6. Considering housing and regeneration matters affecting the area or its inhabitants, including where these matters have been brought to the attention of the sub-committee by tenant and resident associations, or members of the general public; and</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>7. The sub-committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Quorum: Three voting Members</p>	
<p>Additional Information: Is contained in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Part A Section 9 (Overview and Scrutiny) • Constitution Part B Section 30 (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules) • Constitution Part D Section 53 (Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Procedure Rules) 	

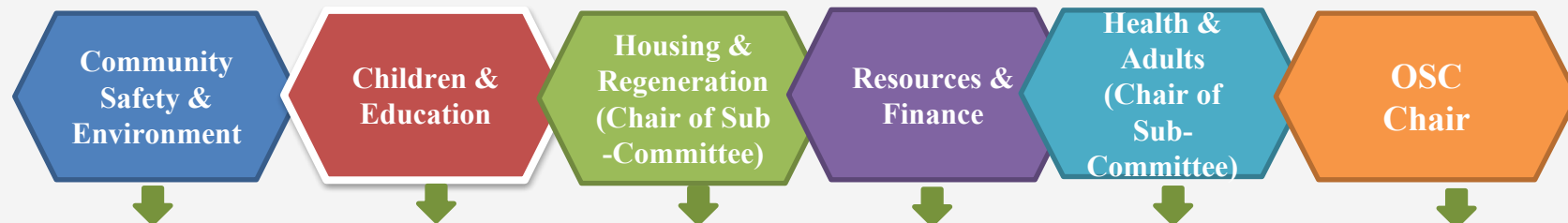
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<p>Summary Description: The Council will appoint an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discharge the functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to review or scrutinise decisions made in connection with the discharge of Executive functions. 2. to make reports or recommendations to the Council or Cabinet with respect to the discharge of Executive functions. 3. to review or scrutinise decisions made in connection with the discharge of non-executive functions; and 4. to make reports or recommendations to the Council or to Cabinet on matters affecting the Council's area or its citizens. 5. Grants scrutiny will be the responsibility of the OSC committee, under the remit of the Scrutiny Lead for Resources. <p>The aim is to make the decision-making process more transparent, accountable, and inclusive, and improve services for people by being responsive to their needs.</p>	
<p>Membership: 9 non-executive councillors – including the chair and leads from Sub Committees.</p> <p>Two non-voting Co-Optees may also be appointed.</p>	
Functions	Delegation of Functions
1. To discharge the functions conferred by sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000; or any functions which may be conferred on it by virtue of regulations under section 244(2ZE) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (local authority scrutiny of health matters) in accordance with the arrangements specified for the discharge of the Overview and Scrutiny function and the establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee contained within Sections 9 and 30 of the Constitution	None
2. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's functions	None
3. Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet	None
4. Making reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of its functions	None
5. Delivering (3) by organising an annual work programme, drawing on the knowledge and priorities of the Council, registered providers, and other stakeholders, that will identify relevant topics or issues that can be properly scrutinised	None
6. Holding service providers to account, where recent performance fails to meet the recognised standard, by looking at relevant evidence and make recommendations for service improvements	None

7. Considering strategic matters affecting the area or its inhabitants, including where these matters have been brought to the attention of the sub-committee by tenant and resident associations, or members of the general public	None
8. In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme: (a) To require a Chief Officer to give evidence to the Committee on a matter that is the subject of a petition including 1,000 or more valid signatures (the Committee will also invite the relevant Executive Member to the meeting); and (b) To undertake a review if a petition organiser feels the authority's response to their petition was inadequate	None
9. On behalf of the Council to establish and make appointments to any joint overview and scrutiny committee	None
10. To consider any local government matter referred to the Committee by a Councillor in accordance with Section 9FC(c) of the Local Government Act 2000 which is not relevant to the functions of the committee and is not an excluded matter.	None
Quorum: Three members of the Committee	
Additional Information: Is contained in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Part A Section 9 (Overview and Scrutiny) • Constitution Part B Section 30 (Overview and Scrutiny Rules) 	

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The Scrutiny Leads Portfolios



- Community Safety & Environment**
1. Community Safety
 2. THEO's Enforcement
 3. Crime Prevention
 4. Anti-Social Behaviour
 5. Drugs and Alcohol
 6. Crime Prevention Tackling
 7. Radicalisation/ Prevent
 8. Waste Management & Recycling
 9. Street Management & Cleanliness
 10. Environmental & Health and Protection
 11. Environmental enforcement
 12. Parking Services
 13. Parks and Open Spaces
 14. Transport Services
 15. Neighbourhood refresh programme
 16. Highways
 17. Road Safety & Cycling
 18. Licensing Policy and Strategy
 19. Trading Standards
 20. Air Quality

- Children & Education**
1. Children Services & Ofsted
 2. Children Social Care (CSC)
 3. Looked After Children and Child Protection
 4. CWD and Special Needs
 5. Youth Services
 6. Youth Offending & Youth Justice
 7. Tackling Child Poverty
 8. Early Years, Learning & Play
 9. Children's Centres
 10. Young People & Learning
 11. School Improvement
 12. Further and Higher Education
 13. Arts and Events
 14. Cultural Creative Industries
 15. Community Language Services

- Housing & Regeneration (Chair of Sub-Committee)**
1. Housing Mgt & Better Neighbourhoods
 2. Housing Options and Advice
 3. Tower Hamlet Homes & Registered providers
 4. Private Sector Housing
 5. Housing Strategy
 6. Economic Regeneration
 7. Housing Fire Safety
 8. New Council Homes
 9. Local Development Framework & Local Plan
 10. Regeneration Strategy & Sustainability
 11. Asset Management
 12. Planning Services, building control and enforcement
 13. Major projects
 14. Employment Strategy
 15. Tackling Economic Inequality
 16. Employment Partnership (inc JCP)
 17. Economic Development
 18. Skills Improvement
 19. Employment Initiatives (Work Path)
 20. Volunteering, Apprenticeships and Training
 21. Support for local businesses
 22. Market and Town Centres

- Resources & Finance**
1. Finance Budget Development & Monitoring
 2. Capital Strategy & Delivery
 3. Capital Delivery & Property Services
 4. Grants and Voluntary Sector
 5. Procurement & Corporate Programmes
 6. Value for Money
 7. Revenue Services
 8. Human Resources
 9. ICT
 10. Risk Management
 11. Tackling poverty and welfare reform
 12. Customer Access & local Presence
 13. Idea Stores and Libraries
 14. Digital Inclusion and Internet Access

- Health & Adults (Chair of Sub-Committee)**
1. Adult Social Care
 2. Adults with Disabilities
 3. Mental Health
 4. Carers
 5. Loneliness
 6. Tackling Health Inequalities
 7. Public health
 8. Leisure Sports & Physical Activity
 9. NHS health services
 10. Integrated services

- OSC Chair**
1. Strategy and performance
 2. Strategic Partnership
 3. Oversight of Budget scrutiny
 4. Tower Hamlets Partnerships & Tower Hamlets Plan
 5. Policy Development and implementation
 6. Cohesion, integration and community relations
 7. Civic Centre
 8. Brexit
 9. Council Transformation and continuous improvement
 10. Communication
 11. Equalities
 12. Members Support

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CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Committee Calendar 2021/22

	MEETING DAY/TIME/	MAY 21	JUN 21	JUL 21	AUG 21	SEP 21	OCT 21	NOV 21	DEC 21	JAN 22	FEB 22	MAR 22	APR 22	MAY 22	JUN 22	No. of Mtgs
COUNCIL																
Council	7.00pm Wednesday	19 (AGM)		21		29		17		19		2 (B) 10(RB)** 16		25 (AGM)		8
CABINET																
Cabinet (monthly)	5.30 pm Wednesday	26	30	28		22	27	24	15	5, 26	23	9				11
Grants Determination Sub Committee (every 8 weeks)	5.30pm Wednesday		23			1		3		12		9 (at rise of Cabin et)				5
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY																
Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Monthly)	6.30 pm Mondays	24	28	26		20	25	22	13	10(B) 24 31(RB)	21	7				12
Children and Education Scrutiny Sub Committee (5 a year)	6.30pm		14			2	21		8		28					5
Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub Committee (5 a year)	6.30pm		8			1	26		16			8				5
Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee (every 2 months)	6.30pm		22			9	19		2			15				5
Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (dates set externally)	External		23			13			14			15				4

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

	MEETING DAY/TIME/	MAY 21	JUN 21	JUL 21	AUG 21	SEP 21	OCT 21	NOV 21	DEC 21	JAN 22	FEB 22	MAR 22	APR 22	MAY 22	JUN 22	No. of Mtgs
COMMITTEES AND PANELS																
Development Committee (monthly)	6.30 pm Thursday		17	22	12	14	14	11	9	6	3	3	7		23*	11
Strategic Development Committee (every 5/6 weeks)	6.30 pm Wednesday		9	14	18	23 (Thu)	28 (Thu)		1	12	16	30			15	9
Licensing Committee (quarterly)	6.30 pm Thursday	25				2 (SEV) 9 (+SEV)			9			15			7*	4 + 2
Licensing Sub Committee (fortnightly)	6.30 pm Tuesday		1, 15, 29	13, 27	17	14, 28	12, 26	9, 23	7, 16	11, 25	8, 22	8, 22	5, 19		21*	22
Audit Committee	6.30 pm Thursday			29			7		1			24				4
General Purposes Committee (5 meetings per year)	6.30 pm Tuesday		24				5			18		22				4
Employee Appeals Sub Committee	Ad-hoc if required															
Appointments Sub-Committee	Ad-hoc if required															
Standards (Advisory) Committee (quarterly)	6.00 pm Thursday			1		30		25			10					4
Pensions Board (quarterly)	10.00am		7			6		8				7				4
Pensions Committee (quarterly)	6.30pm		24			23		25				24				4
King George's Field Charity Board (quarterly)	5.30 pm Wednesday		16			15		10			9					4

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

	MEETING DAY/TIME/	MAY 21	JUN 21	JUL 21	AUG 21	SEP 21	OCT 21	NOV 21	DEC 21	JAN 22	FEB 22	MAR 22	APR 22	MAY 22	JUN 22	No. of Mtgs
Partnerships																
Health and Wellbeing Board (every 2 months)	5.00pm Tuesday		29			21		2			1					5
Other Meetings																
Freedom of the Borough	Ad hoc if required															TBA
MEMBERS																
Training & Development (provisional)	6.30pm-8.30pm 2.30pm-4.30pm		1,3	13, 15		15 [■] , 16 [■]	19, 21	9, 11		25, 27	22, 24					7 7
Committee Specific Training (where already booked)		25 (Licensing) 26 (SDC/DC)	2 (SDC/DC)	20 (Audit)		28 (Audit)		24 (Audit)				17 (Audit)				

KEY TO SYMBOLS

- ** - Clashes with, or is the day before or day after a religious holiday
- * - Takes place during Ramadan Meeting time will be 5.30pm wherever the normal starting time would be listed later in the evening
- # - Meeting starting time earlier than the normal scheduled time
- ^ - Provisional date
- - Mandatory Ethics & Probity training
- B - Budget meeting
- (RB) - Reserve budget meeting

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

NOTES:

1. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:

- **RAMADAN 2021** – 12(eve) April to 12 May 2021 (subject to confirmation)
- **EID-AL- FITR 2021** – 12 (eve) to 13 May 2021 (subject to confirmation)
- **SHAVOUT 2021** – 16 (eve) to 18 May June 2021
- **EID – UL – ADHA 2021** – 19 (eve) to 20 July 2021 (subject to confirmation)
- **ASHURA 2021** – 18 (eve) to 19 August 2021
- **ROSH HASHANAH 2021** – 6 (eve) to 8 September 2021
- **YOM KIPPUR 2021** – 15 (eve) to 16 September 2021
- **SUKKOT 2021** – 20 (eve) to 27 September
- **DIWALI 2021** – 4 November 2021
- **CHANUKAH 2021** – 28(eve) November to 6 December 2021
- **PASSOVER 2022** – 15(eve) April 2022 to 23 April 2022
- **EASTER 2022:** - Good Friday 15 April 2022, Easter Monday 18 April 2022
- **RAMADAN 2022** – 2 (eve) April 2022 – 1 May 2022 (subject to confirmation),
- **EID-AL-FITR 2022** – 2 (eve) to 3 May 2022 (subject to confirmation)

2. BANK HOLIDAYS:

- **MAY 2021** – 3, 31
- **AUGUST 2021** - 30
- **DECEMBER 2021** – 27, 28
- **JANUARY/NEW YEAR 2022** – 3
- **APRIL 2022** – 15, 18
- **MAY 2022** – 2
- **JUNE 2022** – 2, 3

3. POLITICAL GROUPS:

- Conservative Party Conference – 3 October - 6 October 2021
- Labour Party Conference – 25 September – 29 September 2021

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

4. **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS:**


- **2021**
 - Half Term – 31 May – 4 June
 - Summer Holidays – 23 July – 31 August
 - Half Term – 25 October – 29 October
 - Christmas Holidays – 22 December 2021 – 03 January 2022

- **2022**
 - Half Term – 14 February – 18 February
 - Easter Break – 4 April – 18 April
 - Half Term – 30 May – 3 June
 - Summer Holidays – 25 July – 31 August (tbc)

MEMBERS:

- **Training And Development**
 - Training and development sessions in May/June 2021 will feature mandatory committee-based training – some of these dates are listed above but others may be arranged as required.

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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Meeting (Overview and Scrutiny)</p> <p>24th May, 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of Janet Fasan Divisional Director Legal and Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Call-In Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	David Knight
Wards affected	ALL

CONSIDERATION OF THE “CALL IN”

Having met the “Call In” request criteria, the matter is referred to the OSC in order to determine the “Call In” and decide whether to refer the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration.

The following procedure is to be followed by the Committee for consideration of the “Call In”:

- i. Chair to invite a call-in member to present call-in.
- ii. Chair to invite members of the Committee to ask question.
- iii. Chair to Invite Cabinet Member to respond to the call-in.
- iv. Chair to invite members of the Committee to ask questions.
- v. Followed by a general debate.

It is open to the OSC to either resolve to take no action (which would have the effect of endorsing the original Mayoral decision/s), or to refer the matter back to the Mayor for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considers:

1. The contents of the attached report, review the Mayor in Cabinet’s decision (provisional, subject to Call In) arising; and

2. Decide whether to accept the decision or to refer the matter back to the Mayor with proposals and reasons.

The Cabinet on 24th March 2021 considered a report from the Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission as a result of discussions on the report it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. note the work the Commission has undertaken during the four-month period and agree the recommendations set out in the report.

The decision above has been 'Called-In' by Councillor Puru Miah (signed also by Councillors Peter Gold; Rabina Khan; Harun Miah and Andrew Wood). This is in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution.

N.B. In accordance with the OSC Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 4th June 2013, any Member(s) who present(s) the "Call In" is (are) not eligible to participate in the general debate.

REASONS FOR THE "CALL IN"

The decision is in breach of Tower Hamlets Council's common law duty and statutory duties under the law.

1. Tower Hamlets Council is in breach of its common law duty to consult.

When the BAME Inequalities Report was launched in October 2020, one of its stated aims was:

"Engage and operate at the heart of Tower Hamlets' communities to hear about people's lived experience and solutions, specifically Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women and young people who experience higher levels of inequality."

Therefore, residents, especially BAME residents had legitimate expectations for Tower Hamlets Council to keep its promise and to consult them fairly, or allow BAME residents, the proper means to engage with the Commission.

Tower Hamlets Council has not kept to that promise in regard to consultation and engagement of BAME residents with the commission or the report. For example:

- A. All the consultations were conducted online. In a borough with high levels of data poverty, which disproportionately affects the BAME residents.
- B. No translations were provided in a consultation aimed at BAME residents, many of whom have difficulties with the English language.

2. Tower Hamlets Council is in breach of its statutory duties, in particular, the Public Sector Equalities Duty as set out in s.149 of the Equalities Act 2010.

By inadequately providing the means for BAME residents to engage with the commission and consultation, Tower Hamlets Council has failed in its Public Sector Equalities Duties. In particular, the duty to encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Council in its consultation and engagement with the Commission and report has failed to give due regards to the needs of BAME residents.

3. The decision to note the report within a week of its publication is irrational.

The decision to note the report within a week of its publication by the Mayor and Cabinet, when adequately not enabling BAME residents to engage with the Commission or its consultation goes against the stated object of the report. It is also unreasonable for the Mayor and Cabinet to believe that less than a one-week period is adequate to garner views on a report that took five months to formulate.

4. Tower Hamlets Council has failed to apply the MacPherson Principles and investigate allegations of discrimination

Serious allegations of discriminations were made to the Commissioners. Yet the report nor the Mayor and Cabinet applied the MacPherson principles in treating the allegations as racist incidents and investigating them.

Leaving Tower Hamlets Council open to the charge of a cover-up, by failing to investigate adequately allegations of racial discrimination.

ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION PROPOSED

In order to mitigate against the above failures and breach of common law and statutory duties by Tower Hamlets Council.

- ❖ **Proposal 1:** For Mayor and Cabinet not to note the report, but to have it translated into community languages and produced in a non-digital format which should then be distributed in places like Ideas stores and GP surgeries. Then put out to further consultation for a six-month period.
- ❖ **Proposal 2:** For an independent panel to be formed to investigate the allegations of racial discrimination made to the Commission. And for the panel to report its finding to the full council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considers:

1. The contents of the attached report, review the decision (provisional, subject to Call In) arising; and

2. Decide whether to accept the decision or to refer the matter back to the Mayor with proposals and reasons.

Cabinet 24 March 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Will Tuckley, Chief Executive	Classification: Unrestricted
Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission – Report	

Lead Member	Councillor Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services and Education
Originating Officer(s)	Afazul Hoque, Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy Daniel Kerr, Strategy & Policy Manager
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	3 February 2021
Forward Plan Notice Published	This report has been assessed as not meeting the key decision criteria
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 1 - People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities Priority 2 - A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in Priority 3 - A dynamic, outcomes-based council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough

Executive Summary

This report sets out the findings and recommendations from the work of the Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission which took place between September – December 2020.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the work the Commission has undertaken during the four-month period and agree the recommendations set out in the report.
2. Comment on how the council can play a leadership role in taking forward the recommendations including changes in policy within the council.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report provides recommendations to improve the inequalities of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. The report highlights a number of areas where the borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities are experiencing poorer outcomes including in the areas of employment, health, and community leadership.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not consider the findings and recommendations from the Commission but this is not recommended as the Commission has been established by the council and provides an opportunity to address inequalities faced by our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The Commission has undertaken work over a four month period and has developed a solid evidence base to support the need for the recommendations put forward.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The shocking and public killing of George Floyd, and subsequent Black Lives Matter demonstrations across the world has brought the subject of race inequality to the forefront of personal and political discussions. The council is committed to creating cohesive communities that are strong, fair and equal. We recognise that we can only do this by working in partnership with our communities to advance equality, promote good relations and tackle discrimination.
- 3.2 Equality is embedded in our partnership plans and addressing inequalities is a core part of our outlook and the way we deliver public services. Tower Hamlets is a place that has for generations welcomed people from all over the world, and has come together in solidarity to stand up to racism and fascism from those who wish to divide our community.
- 3.3 However, we understand that for all off our success and progress there remains much room for improvement to achieve greater equality in the borough. We know that racial discrimination means some people have neither had equal access to public services or employment, nor fair treatment and life chances.
- 3.4 In addition to the Black Lives Matter movement, the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population has served to expose the severe consequences of the structural disadvantages and discrimination faced by these communities. Public Health England's review of disparities in the risk and outcomes of Covid-19 found that imbedded inequality means that the likelihood of testing positive and dying with Covid-19 is higher for Black and Asian ethnic groups when compared to White ethnic groups.

3.5 In recognition of the high level of concern raised about the longstanding levels of racial inequality in the borough, the council established a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequality Commission. The Commission's areas of focus were influenced by an engagement event during the summer in which over 40 stakeholders attended. The Commission was tasked to deliver tangible and practical actions which will deliver real change to the lives of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, and allow the council and its partners to champion the enormous impact these communities can contribute to the borough.

3.6 The key aims of the Commission were:

1. Engage and operate at the heart of Tower Hamlets' communities to hear about people's lived experience and solutions, specifically Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women and young people who experience higher levels of inequality.
2. Work with institutions to advance and prioritise race equality to achieve an inclusive, cohesive, thriving and representative Tower Hamlets.
3. Influence local, sub-regional and regional leaders who have significant influence on Tower Hamlets, particularly in the development of policy and strategy practices and the allocation of resources.

3.7 The Commission focused on the following areas:

1. Community leadership
2. Health
3. Education
4. Employment

3.8 The Commission comprised of the following Commissioners:

- Cllr Asma Begum, Chair (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Youth and Equalities)
- Cllr Mufeedah Bustin (Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion)
- Lord Simon Woolley (Director of Operation Black Vote)
- Safia Jama (Director of Womens Inclusive Team)
- Dr Kambiz Boomla (Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Population Health Sciences at Queen Mary University of London)
- Ian Parkes (Chief Executive, East London Business Alliance)
- Vivian Akinremi (Deputy Young Mayor Tower Hamlets)
- Edwin Ndlovu (Director of Operations for East London NHS Foundation Trust)
- Pam Bhamra (Chair of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum)
- Graeme McDonald (Managing Director of Solace and Solace in Business)

3.9 The Commission undertook the following activities:

- Held 4 formal Commission meetings;

- Engagement with partner agencies through PEG, THHF, THT , Health & Wellbeing Board, Children’s and Families Partnership Board
- Engaged 27 witnesses
- Received 71 responses to call for evidence
- Captured 87 lived experiences through 6 focus groups with school governors, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women, teachers, patients, public and private sector employees and young people
- Dedicated web pages for Commission and regular social media updates

Key Findings

- 3.10 It was clear that there has been significant progress in the borough, most noticeably in educational attainment, and the Commission heard many examples of best practice. However, the pace of change has not been quick enough, nor has it been radical. Much of the evidence suggests that institutional and structural racism is a key barrier in accessing services and progression in life and employment. Many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents do not have access to same social capital as their White peers and the impact from this permeates into many areas of their life.
- 3.11 Tower Hamlets is a borough which celebrates its diverse communities, but it needs to do more to understand the nuanced and divergent experiences of different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. This is particularly relevant when considering data, targets and representation which emerged as a reoccurring theme across the Commission’s areas of focus. Many organisations are not collecting comprehensive, disaggregated ethnicity data which would allow them to understand their progress and deliver services which accurately responds to the needs of those who use them. Furthermore, the lack of representation in many areas of public life, or ambitious targets to increase representation, has a profound impact on the way residents perceive, interact and experience services. Every organisation in the borough must engage in ethnic minority pay gap reporting and be transparent about the composition of their boards and structures to help drive targets.
- 3.12 It is clear there is real commitment and passion to improve outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Whilst the Commission makes many important recommendations, it is the intention to prioritise to **make Tower Hamlets an anti-racist place**, where there is a shared vision and delivery plan by all organisations to make changes at pace. In practice, this will be showcased by an anti-racist pledge which will include tangible actions to drive improvement through establishing a race equality network, setting challenging targets, collecting and publishing disaggregated ethnicity data, increasing representation and better utilisation of organisations buying and influencing powers.

Community Leadership

- 3.13 Engagement from the community is vital to ensure Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic voices shape decision making. Many are unaware of the opportunities available to them. For others, they are disheartened by the lack of representation and feel that the opportunities are not for people from their community. Moreover, many people from these communities are from

disadvantaged backgrounds and feel that they do not have the time or skillset to effectively engage. Further work is needed to develop the infrastructure which grows and supports people to engage with their community. In order to do this, community leadership needs a long-term commitment and investment. There needs to be a systemic plan on how this can be resourced and a clear objective and commitment which states what the borough wants to achieve.

Health

- 3.14 The constraints of structural racism are most apparent when considering health outcomes of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents which are worse than those of White residents in many areas, with many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents suffering from a higher burden of multimorbidity. A considerable emphasis needs to be placed on improving the partnership approach to tackle the wider determinants of health, with too many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents experiencing poorer employment and housing conditions. Furthermore, access to health services needs to be improved by ensuring services meet the cultural needs of our diverse communities and developing strong and effective relationships with these community. Digital exclusion is a prevalent access barrier, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside ineffective communication and inadequate translation services. The need to work with our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities should be at forefront of our recovery agenda ensuring we deliver real improvement in health outcomes.

Education and Employment

- 3.15 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children are achieving good academic success however this has not translated into good employment. There are clear limitations in social capital, with many children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families lacking the confidence and networks to compete with their White peers. Too many young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families are unfamiliar with the testing and recruitment processes employers undertake, and have not been exposed to the professional, corporate world. Pipelines from primary schools through to university and into employment need to be strengthened and there must be a considerable obligation placed on employers in Canary Wharf and the City of London to engage. Large employers must consider how they can develop pipelines, structures and support to engage Black, Asian and Minority young people and how they can accelerate the pace of change. Representation in these organisations must significantly improve and the structural barriers must be removed. Efforts to increase the capacity of young people in education settings will not succeed so long as the structural barriers remain.
- 3.16 The Commission spent a lot of time speaking to the leading organisations in the borough and the lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation, particularly those from Black African and Caribbean groups, was shocking. The Commission calls for the development of a leadership programme to nurture the next generation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leaders. Alongside this, organisations must embrace a cultural shift at all levels. The need for a safe space to have open and honest discussions about race is vital.

- 3.17 Based on the Commission's findings and recommendations the Commission developed the following vision and outcomes:

Vision

By 2025 Tower Hamlets is an anti-racist borough where organisations work together to make radical changes that close inequality gaps by advancing opportunities and ensure the experience of racism within structures and institutions is eradicated.

The Commission makes recommendations which aim to ensure:

- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are publicly committed to addressing race inequality in access to their services, employment, and decision making boards
- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are using disaggregated data and targets to identify and address inequalities;
- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are using their spending power and influence to ensure their suppliers and partners deliver against race equality commitment;
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in Tower Hamlets are empowered and have access to digital skills and equipment to access services and employment;
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in Tower Hamlets are skilled and supported to access community leadership positions and progress in employment;
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership speaks with one voice locally, regionally and nationally on race equality;
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership operates effectively and addresses wider determinate of health inequalities;
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents are engaged in the design and delivery of services which impacts them;
- Local employers are undertaking positive active actions to diversify their workforce at all levels;
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership holds to account local organisations on progress on race inequality.

Next Steps and Delivery

- 3.18 The recommendations set out in this report will be delivered through the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group. The council will assume a lead role and will act as a facilitator to engage and support partners in both the public and private sector to respond to these recommendations. However, achieving true equality in the borough is not a feat the council can achieve alone and the collective efforts of all partners is critical in ensuring the successful implementation of these recommendations. The Commission therefore recommends that a sub group of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group be established to lead on delivery of the recommendations and work with

the voluntary and community sector Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network to ensure the voice of the community is reflected in the delivery.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The focus of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic inequalities Commission was to explore inequalities facing our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The findings and recommendations reflect this. The Commission noted the importance of intersectionality of inequalities facing different protected characteristics such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women, different groups within Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and deprivation. The recommendations from this Commission if taken forward by the Tower Hamlets Partnership will help to address inequalities in Tower Hamlets and provide a platform to ensure equalities remains at the forefront of our collective work.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 [Report authors should identify any other specific issues relevant to consideration of this report. Including, but not limited to, the issues noted above. This section of the report can also be used to re-emphasise particular issues that Members must have considered before taking the decision (for example issues that may come up if an objection was taken to court). Note – Paragraph 5.1 MUST NOT be deleted.]

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Agreed recommendations are expected to be implemented within the existing resources of the partner organisations. Funding would be need to identified prior to undertaking any initiatives that require extra resources.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 This report provides the Mayor in Cabinet with the outcome of the BAME inequalities commission and makes recommendations based on those findings. There are no specific legal implications arising from the report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- **Appendix 1 – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report**

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

**Black, Asian and
Minority Ethnic**

INEQUALITIES
COMMISSION



Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission

Report and
Recommendations
2021



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- Front cover bottom right image courtesy of East London Business Alliance Programme
- Battle of Cable Street and graffiti protest images courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives

CHAIR'S FOREWORD: CLLR ASMA BEGUM, COMMISSION CHAIR

I'm enormously proud to introduce this report.

2020 was a year dominated by the deadly spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and it has had a profound impact on everyone. Then in the midst of the upheaval came the horrific scenes from the United States of George Floyd being killed after a police officer pressed his knee on his neck. People from across the world world expressed shock and outrage at what had taken place, and many took to the street to protest under the banner of Black Lives Matter.

These two world events came together as we heard alarming reports detailing the disproportionately negative impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Through local protests and proactive action to remove the statue of slave owner Robert Milligan from West India Dock, Tower Hamlets joined the calls of those demanding change.

It is in this context that the council responded to the voices across our community and I was honoured to be tasked in leading a comprehensive review into the inequalities faced by our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.

This report examines where we are making progress, where we are stalling and where we are falling short. Also, it highlights the relationship between race and socio-economic disadvantage across several areas that impact on the experience of our residents.

I should mention that there has been considerable progress in many areas and the council and its partners must acknowledge and celebrate this. We all know that our greatest assets are the residents of Tower Hamlets. We understand and value diversity, and we are a borough with a rich history of welcoming communities from around the world. We want to ensure Tower Hamlets continues to be an inclusive place for people to work, learn, have fun and make this their home.



Moving forward we want to ensure that our partners put the voice and experience of all our communities at the heart of everything we do. We must do more to listen and understand their experiences and take action to improve outcomes for our residents, in particular listening to the quieter voices and smaller communities who often feel excluded. Through our Commission we looked beyond the data and listened to the real experience of our residents so that their concerns shape and drive any improvements we need to make.

Unfortunately, for many people from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic communities, the pace of change has not been fast enough. People are tired of having to explain their experience because it is widely and publicly documented. Outlined in this report is a picture of inequality in opportunity that is an entrenched experience in education, health, employment and community leadership that has far reaching implications. The Commission heard from young people and women from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities who are worried about their future employment opportunities and outcomes. The pandemic has raised the fear of being pushed further to the back of queue thereby exacerbating existing inequalities. Sadly, it is clear from national research and reviews about inequality, that race remains a significant factor impacting on outcomes, and the existence of structural injustice and discrimination in our society still has a devastating presence in too many of our residents lives.

As I listened to witnesses presenting to the Commission, from many different communities and sectors in the borough, I was struck by the passion in their words and ashamed that many felt they still live in a place where the colour of their skin determines their experience, opportunity and outcome. We all have an obligation to be better and we must do more to deliver changes to improve outcomes for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. I welcome the many public commitments to become anti-racist organisations as a result of the events of the last year. However, I want organisations in Tower Hamlets to be bolder and clearer about what this means in practice. This Commission represents the beginning of our commitment to be an anti-racist borough and to take collective action to tackle race inequality. As Chair of the Commission I feel it is important to call to action partners in

Tower Hamlets because change can only be achieved at pace if we are working together across communities and organisations.

This commitment is now even more urgent. The pandemic has had a devastating impact on our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and exposed stark inequalities they face. It has highlighted the interrelationship with poverty and race and has sharpened the focus of the existing institutional and structural racial inequality. I hope that as we move from pandemic to recovery, the impact on our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities remains at the forefront of social and political discourse and any improvement must lead to a positive legacy from this terrible virus.

I would like to thank all those that contributed to this review and shared personal experiences of a very difficult topic in such a passionate, heartfelt, and commendable way. Commissioners understand that in sharing your stories with us you have placed your faith in us to deliver change and we do not take this responsibility lightly. I promise that we will aim to deliver on our recommendations with the same level of commitment and passion you showed. My commitment is to tackle race inequality in the borough, and I welcome the enthusiasm of the council and partners who have engaged in this. We will double our efforts to build a fair society where everyone of us, whatever our backgrounds, will work together in addressing the issues of inequalities.

MY STORY

On a personal level, chairing this Commission has been a journey of discovery for me. It has forced me to recognise and confront the barriers I have faced and suppressed in my life. I grew up in Tower Hamlets and was raised by a single mum which, as an Asian Muslim, meant that I faced many cultural challenges. I have been judged because of the colour of my skin and experienced trauma because of racist abuse. I still remember the time people threw eggs at me as I walked to school, and when live fireworks were posted through my letterbox. We are in a different place today and sadly racism still exists, but it has evolved and is just as destructive. It is more sophisticated, covert, and entrenched in society. As a young woman entering politics and engaging in civic life, I also experienced discrimination because of my race, faith and gender and felt the sense of imposter syndrome that many witnesses confessed to feeling because I didn't see other people who looked like me paving the way or standing beside me. It saddened me to hear that this is still the experience for many.

As I listened to witnesses, I realised that I have suppressed much of this discrimination and became blind to it, not by choice, it just became my norm. In recent weeks many people have commented that I have a newfound confidence and credit for this must go to this Commission. It has changed my perspective and empowered me to challenge the discrimination which I have always tolerated or dismissed. I am determined to pave the way for the next generation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people. My story is also one which is populated by the opportunities given to me by allies and the benefits of integration and cohesion, where people have looked beyond my ethnicity, gender and family background and supported me. I know people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds simply want the same opportunity to excel. I implore all of you reading this report, regardless of your background, to consider how you can play a role in ensuring a fairer society for all and provide the opportunity for everyone to excel.

TIME FOR ACTION

The events of 2020 have had a profound impact on many of us. They have forced us to hold difficult conversations that laid bare uncomfortable truths which we must not lose sight of. However, we must now move quickly to take action in 2021 and begin a collective journey to close the inequality gap that exists for so many of our residents. As one of the most diverse boroughs in the country we are determined to take a leadership approach and be at the forefront of addressing race inequality. I hope our recommendations and calls to action will ensure there are systems in place to tackle this urgently and prevent escalation of tensions between our communities. This Commission focused on Tower Hamlets but the issues it identifies are felt all over the country. I hope this will be a beacon for other local authorities to follow.

Finally, this Commission would not have been possible without the commitment, wisdom and passion of my fellow Commissioners. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their time, energy, and contributions.

**Cllr Asma Begum, Commission Chair
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services and Education**

COMMISSIONERS



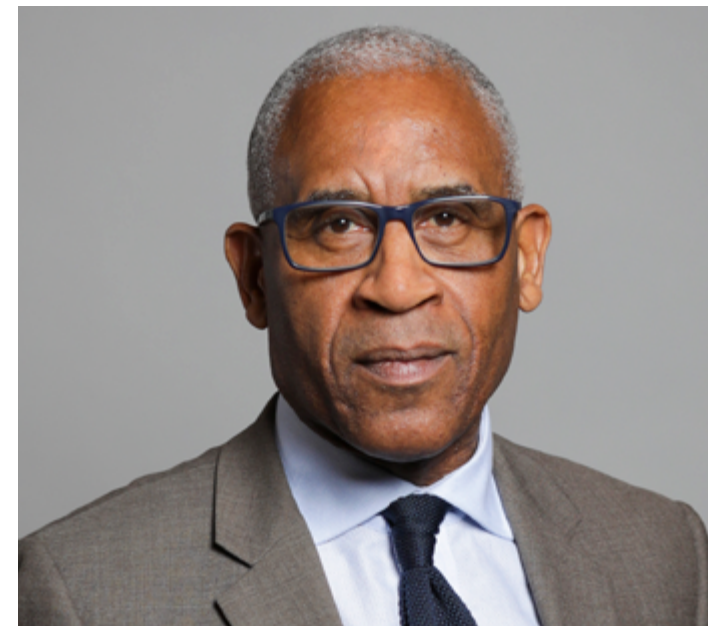
Cllr Asma Begum, Chair

Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Youth and Equalities



Cllr Mufeedah Bustin

Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion



Lord Simon Woolley

Director of Operation Black Vote



Safia Jama

Director of Womens Inclusive Team



Dr Kambiz Boomla

Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Population Health Sciences at Queen Mary University of London



Ian Parkes

Chief Executive, East London Business Alliance



Vivian Akinremi

Deputy Young Mayor Tower Hamlets



Edwin Ndlovu

Director of Operations for East London NHS Foundation Trust



Pam Bhamra

Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum



Graeme McDonald

Managing Director of Solace and Solace in Business

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission would like to thank everyone who attended the Commission meetings, our focus groups, and residents and local organisations who submitted written evidence. We are extremely grateful for your insights and lived experiences which have shaped the Commission's findings and recommendations:

List of Focus groups

- BAME Women's Groups from Account3
- School Governors – Representation from schools across the borough
- Health & Social Care Patients
- Schoolteachers
- Young People from the youth council - LBTH
- Public & Private Sector Employees

Health

Dianne Barnham, CEO, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets
Dr Jackie Applebee, Chair, Tower Hamlets Local Medical Committee
Lorraine Sunduza, Chief Nurse, East London Foundation Trust
Alwen Williams, CEO, BARTS Health NHS Trust
Mahmud Hasan, CEO, APASEN

Employment

Sandra Kerr CBE, Race Equality Director, Business in the Community
Will Tuckley, Chief Executive, LBTH
Amanda Marcus, Divisional Director of HR, LBTH
Divya Patel, Outreach Recruitment Manager, London Fire Brigade
Jess McNicholas, Head of Global Inclusion and Diversity at State Street Metropolitan Police

Community Leadership

James Thomas – Corporate Director of Children and Culture, LBTH
Jeremy Crook OBE – Chief Executive of Black Training and Enterprise Group
Chris Banks – Joint chief Executive, Tower Hamlets GP Care Group
Peter Okali – Chief Executive - THCVS
Naureen Bhatti – GP Tower Hamlets
Babu Bhattacharjee – Director of Communities & Neighbourhoods, Poplar HARCA

Education

Dr Halima Begum – Chief Executive, Runnymede Trust
Kim Nguyen and Gabriel Osamor – ELBA
Kabir Miah – Deputy Head Swanlea
Stephanie Marshall- Vice Principle, Education, Queen Mary University
Julie Hutchinson, Deputy Chief Executive, East London Business Alliance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commission was set up in September 2020 to examine the inequalities experienced by Tower Hamlets Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. The lived experiences, opportunities and outcomes for Tower Hamlets' Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities differ detrimentally from those of their White peers. Structural and institutional racism remains a debilitating issue facing the borough and its residents. Many Tower Hamlets' Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities have neither had equal access to services or employment nor fair treatment and opportunities.

The Commission was keen to concentrate on a few pivotal areas where it can have a real impact and held an engagement event with a range of stakeholders in the summer of 2020 to explore the key issues. From this it was agreed the Commission would focus on community leadership, health, education and employment. Our data and community insight identified these areas as the most pressing and significant for Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities. The Commission engaged extensively with the community and prioritised the voices from those who live and work in the borough to understand how we can deliver tangible and lasting improvements.

The Commission heard about the many great and commendable things which have been happening. There has been progress in many areas, but it has been too slow and there are questions about whether the programmes have gone far enough or are targeted appropriately. We must do more, and we must do it better and faster. As one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, Tower Hamlets is well placed to assume a leadership role in this space. Through the borough's residents, businesses, public sector and voluntary sector, Tower Hamlets has the unique assets which allows it to lead in addressing the inequalities facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

"The labour market has nothing to do with skills, education or experience."



KEY FINDINGS

It is clear that there has been significant progress in the borough, most noticeably in educational attainment, and the Commission heard many examples of best practice. However, the pace of change has not been quick enough, nor has it been radical. Much of the evidence suggests that racism is a key barrier in accessing services and progression in life and employment. Many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents do not have access to same social capital as their White peers and the impact from this permeates into many areas of their life.

The Commission recognises that Tower Hamlets is a borough which celebrates its diverse communities, but it needs to do more to understand the nuanced and divergent experiences of different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. This is particularly relevant when considering data, targets and representation which emerged as a reoccurring theme across the Commission's areas of focus. Many organisations are not collecting comprehensive, disaggregated ethnicity data which would allow them to understand their progress and deliver services which accurately responds to the needs of those who use them. Furthermore, the lack of representation in many areas of public life, or ambitious targets to increase representation, has a profound impact on the way residents perceive, interact and experience services. Every organisation in the borough must engage in ethnic minority pay gap reporting and be transparent about the composition of their boards and structures to help drive targets.

It is clear there is real commitment and passion to improve outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Whilst this report makes many important recommendations, it is the intention of the Commission to prioritise to make Tower Hamlets an anti-racist place, where organisations share a vision and plan to make changes at pace. In practice, this will be showcased by an anti-racist pledge which will include tangible actions to drive improvement in employment, services, and procurement. This will involve establishing a race equality network, setting challenging targets, collecting and publishing disaggregated ethnicity data, increasing representation and better utilisation of organisations buying and influencing powers. By the end of 2021 we expect all public sector organisations in the borough to sign up to this.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Engagement from the community is vital to ensure Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic voices shape decision making. Many are unaware of the opportunities available to them. For others, they are disheartened by the lack of representation and feel that the opportunities are not for people from their community. Moreover, many people from these communities are from disadvantaged backgrounds and feel that they do not have the time or skillset to effectively engage. Further work is needed to develop the infrastructure which grows and supports people to engage with their community. In order to do this, community leadership needs a long-term commitment and investment. There needs to be a systemic plan on how this can be resourced and a clear objective and commitment which states what the borough wants to achieve.



HEALTH

The constraints of structural racism are most apparent when considering health outcomes of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents which are worse than those of White residents in many areas, with many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents suffering from a higher burden of multimorbidity.

A considerable emphasis needs to be placed on improving the partnership approach to tackle the wider determinants of health, with too many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents experiencing poorer employment and housing conditions. Furthermore, access to health services needs to be improved by ensuring services meet the cultural needs of our diverse communities and developing strong and effective relationships with these community. Digital exclusion is a prevalent access barrier, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside ineffective communication and inadequate translation services. The need to work with our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities should be at forefront of our recovery agenda ensuring we deliver real improvement in health outcomes.



“Surgery staff questioning if I have the right to be here in front of everyone made me feel like a criminal - all I wanted was to see a GP.”

“Our surnames lead to discrimination”



EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children are achieving good academic success however this has not translated into good employment. There are clear limitations in social capital, with many children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families lacking the confidence and networks to compete with their White peers. Too many young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families are unfamiliar with the testing and recruitment processes employers undertake, and have not been exposed to the professional, corporate world. Pipelines from primary schools through to university and into employment need to be strengthened and there must be a considerable obligation placed on employers in Canary Wharf and the City of London to engage. Large employers must consider how they can develop pipelines, structures and support to engage Black, Asian and Minority young people and how they can accelerate the pace of change. Representation in these organisations must significantly improve and the structural barriers must be removed. Efforts to increase the capacity of young people in education settings will not succeed so long as the structural barriers remain.

The Commission spent a lot of time speaking to the leading organisations in the borough and the lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation, particularly those from Black African and Caribbean groups, was shocking. The Commission calls for the development of a leadership programme to nurture the next generation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leaders. Alongside this, organisations must embrace a cultural shift at all levels. The need for a safe space to have open and honest discussions about race is vital.

VISION

By 2025 Tower Hamlets is an anti-racist borough where organisations work together to make radical changes that close inequality gaps by advancing opportunities and ensure the experience of racism within structures and institutions is eradicated.

The Commission makes recommendations which aim to ensure:

- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are publicly committed to addressing race inequality in access to their services, employment, and decision making boards.
- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are using disaggregated data and targets to identify and address inequalities.
- Organisations in Tower Hamlets are using their spending power and influence to ensure their suppliers and partners deliver against race equality commitment.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in Tower Hamlets are empowered and have access to digital skills and equipment to access services and employment.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in Tower Hamlets are skilled and supported to access community leadership positions and progress in employment.
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership speaks with one voice locally, regionally and nationally on race equality.
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership operates effectively and addresses wider determinate of health inequalities.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents are engaged in the design and delivery of services which impacts them.
- Local employers are undertaking positive active actions to diversify their workforce at all levels.
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership holds to account local organisations on progress on race inequality.

DELIVERY

The recommendations set out in this report will be delivered through the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group. The council will assume a lead role and will act as a facilitator to engage and support partners in both the public and private sector to respond to these recommendations. However, achieving true equality in the borough is not a feat the council can achieve alone, and the collective efforts of all partners is critical in ensuring the successful implementation of these recommendations.

The Commission therefore recommends that a sub group of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group be established to lead on delivery of the recommendations and work with the voluntary and community sector Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network to ensure the voice of the community is reflected in the delivery.



“A lack of minority communities in leadership leads to an invisible psychological ceiling.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission has made 23 recommendations. The Commission was mindful of the need to make recommendations which will have a tangible impact on experiences, opportunities and outcomes for our residents. However, as you read through the narrative of the report you will find further suggestions of actions organisations must take to address the inequalities facing our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The Commission expects all organisations in Tower Hamlets to respond to these findings and hopes that regional and national bodies will carefully consider how these issues play out at a broader level.

GENERAL	
Anti-Racist Borough	Organisations within Tower Hamlets commit to becoming an anti-racist borough. This will include a commitment to work at pace to address inequality and access to services. It will recognise the individual needs of each Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community and it will be delivered through a race equality pledge, race equality network, challenging targets, disaggregated data, increased representation and better utilisation of an organisation's influence through its supply chains, employment practice and services.
Race Equality Pledge	Organisations in Tower Hamlets, especially those that comprise the strategic partnership and work in partnership with the council, sign up to a shared commitment on race equality by the end of 2021. Organisations who sign up to this pledge will support and deliver the commitments set out in the Commission's recommendations. This will enable greater collaboration and support between organisations and strengthen accountability and transparency of commitment and progress. As part of this recommendation, a local award scheme should be established which recognises best practices amongst organisations and individuals. The council and partners should lobby national and regional organisations to set up a high-profile national recognition programme to recognise achievement and drive up standards.
Race Equality Network	A partnership Race Equality Network be developed that monitors the delivery of the Commission's recommendations, influences policy and decision making and enables a safe place for on-going conversation about race equality in Tower Hamlets and drive improvements
Targeted Interventions	In delivering the recommendations of the Commission, organisations should recognise the variety and nuances within the needs of the borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and tailor interventions which address the challenges facing each community, recognising that at present the Somali Community is the biggest Black community.
Targets	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must set ambitious targets for addressing inequalities which deliver real change and year on year progress. Organisations must use effective performance management to monitor progress and report publicly.
Data	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must collate, disaggregate and analyse data in a granular way to understand areas of inequalities facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. This data should be disaggregated to ensure we understand needs of different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.
Influence	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must utilise their influence with contractors, those they give grants to and work in partnership to ensure they comply and meet the standards of the borough equality pledge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP	
Organisational Culture	Organisations must create a culture which values diversity and provides the space and environment which enables Black, Asian and Minority people to develop into community leadership roles within the governance of the organisation.
Training, Development and Peer Support	Organisations should provide support, training, mentoring and development opportunities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals to access leadership roles and be effective in these roles, with a specific focus on a programme for young people. This needs to be at every level from entry to moving into senior roles such as chairs.
Role Models and Allies	That local people are empowered to become role models and allies as visible inspiration and create effective networks for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to leverage support.
Awareness	Develop and deliver a targeted communications campaign to raise awareness of opportunities available which includes profiling of other black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents who have succeeded and made significant contributes. Organisations must demonstrate where they are now and evidence year on year progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

HEALTH	
Digital Exclusion	Organisations address digital exclusion facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities which is having an impact on their ability to access services, employment, engage in community life and achieve their life outcomes.
Campaign & Social Determinants	Lead a high-profile local campaign for the government to provide adequate funding to address health inequalities including socio-economic factors. Lead a high-profile local campaign for the government to provide adequate funding to address health inequalities including socio-economic factors.
Hostile Environment	Local NHS organisations to lead a local campaign for the government to review hostile environment policies which seeks to reduce the profile of the checking of immigration status of service users it is statutorily required to undertake.
Partnership	That partnership structures and strategies are reviewed to deliver radical changes at pace on health inequalities in the borough.
Representation	Tower Hamlets Partnership to develop initiatives to support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents to become health professionals (particularly underrepresented and smaller Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities).
Research	The Health & Wellbeing Board, by the end of 2021, undertake detailed external research on causes of health inequalities amongst Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities which puts engagement of the community at the forefront of its work to identify issues and solutions.
Clinical Training	Review and strengthen clinical training in order to increase understanding of different cultural needs and deliver better health services to all communities.
Co-designed Services	That NHS organisation undertake meaningful engagement and involvement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in design, development and delivery of services. Health organisations need to improve the way services are understood and support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents so that they are empowered and confident to access them. This may mean they need to change the way that services are configured to make them more culturally appropriate.
Communication	NHS organisations review their communication and engagement strategy which ensures guidance and important message is culturally appropriate and available in different languages and uses different approaches to ensure message is reach to different audiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT	
Engage Canary Wharf and City of London	The Tower Hamlets Partnership to engage leaders in Canary Wharf and City of London to consider what they can do to accelerate the pace of change and develop a systemic plan to ensure the required step change to increase the representation of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority employees in senior positions within their organisations takes place.
Testing and Assessment	Local employers and employment support agencies work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people to better prepare them for testing and assessments.
Awareness	Educate parents, carers and children and young people on the range of career options available
Education Bursary Scheme	Building on existing bursary scheme the council works with local organisations to further develop this to support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students from low income family to progress into higher education and professional qualifications.
Leadership Development	Explore opportunities for local employers to come together and work with QMUL to develop a programme which supports Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people across different sector move into senior leadership positions.
Recruitment Processes	Organisations to review their recruitment processes to ensure they are well designed and removes any opportunity for bias.
Representation	Tower Hamlets Partnership to collate and jointly publish disaggregated data, including pay gap and the ethnic profile of their senior leadership, and monitor progress in addressing race inequality amongst senior leadership.
Diversity in Schools	Schools in Tower Hamlets deliver programmes to recruit more Black, Asian and Minority school governors and support them into senior positions. Schools also need to support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teachers into leadership roles include Head and deputy head roles.
Safe Space	Organisations commit to creating a culture which creates a safe space for open and honest conversations about race within their organisation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tower Hamlets has always been a borough committed to creating a cohesive, fair and inclusive community. For many years new communities have settled in Tower Hamlets, because of the opportunities to trade, do business and raise their families, creating a vibrant and diverse borough. One of the borough's' biggest strengths is its proud history of fighting racism and fascism and its continued commitment to diversity. With over 137 languages spoken and 43% of residents born in over 200 different countries Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse places in the country.

However, recent events have once again shone a spotlight on racial inequality and forced everyone including leaders of public, private, faith, voluntary and community sector organisations and institutions, to consider their position and what more must be done. The public death of George Floyd, and subsequent Black Lives Matter demonstrations, has brought race to the forefront of an international conversation. Additionally, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population has served to expose the severe consequences of the unacceptable structural disadvantages and discrimination faced by these communities. Despite numerous studies, commissions and changes to legislation in the UK, racism and inequality remains pervasive, insidious and is the experience for many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, especially in key areas such as housing, employment, education and criminal justice.

In Tower Hamlets, for all the successes and advancements that have been made, for many people equality remains difficult to achieve. Just look at the stark disparities in health outcomes or employment for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women to understand the borough must work harder to address inequality experienced by different groups of people. Institutional and structural racial discrimination has meant some people have neither had equal access to services or employment nor fair treatment and chances. The lived experience and outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in Tower Hamlets still differ significantly and detrimentally from



- At around the peak of first wave of the pandemic, compared to White Londoners, Black Londoners had around two and a half to three times the risk of dying with COVID-19 (within 28 days of diagnosis) and people of Asian ethnicity had up to twice the risk.
- In the second wave, we are seeing a higher risk in Asian Londoners at 1.7 times the risk of dying from COVID-19 (within 28 days of diagnosis) compared to the White population. For Black Londoners, the risk is 1.5 times higher, but less than in the first wave.

[Click here to read the Public Health Matters blog on tackling London's COVID-19 health inequalities.](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

those of their White peers. Whilst we have seen significant progress in educational attainment, employment and housing, Tower Hamlets still has the highest rate of child and pensioner poverty in the country. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents represent a high proportion of those who are most deprived and experience higher levels of unemployment, overcrowding and health issues alongside this. The longer-term impact of COVID-19 is likely to be significantly more detrimental to this group and they must be at the forefront of our response moving forward.

In Tower Hamlets, the Black Lives Matter demonstrations manifested in a protest in Mile End Park and the removal of a statue of noted slaveholder Robert Milligan outside of the Museum of London Docklands. Mayor John Biggs also commissioned a review of the borough's public realm which included a resident consultation to identify monuments, plaques, buildings, roads which celebrated legacies which are not in keeping with the borough's values of diversity. The consultation also sought to identify those legacies and backgrounds which could be better represented. An action plan is currently in development to ensure the council and our partners are taking positive steps to ensure that diversity is better reflected in the borough's public realm.

In recognition of the need to do more the council and its partners held an engagement event in July 2020 to consider the pressing issues impacting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and identify the key areas of focus for the Commission. Over 35 key stakeholders attended the meeting, including representatives from Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group, Queen Mary University London, University of East London, Barts Health NHS Trust, Canary Wharf Group, Tower Hamlets Community Voluntary Services, Tower Hamlets College, Operation Black Vote and representatives from voluntary and community sector groups.

It was agreed that the Commission should concentrate on a few areas to enable it to remain focused on delivering real change and improve outcomes for the borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. It was decided that the Commission would consider community leadership, health, education and employment. The council's data analysis and engagement work highlighted the significant inequalities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in each of these areas. The engagement meeting shared the council's understanding of these areas and helped map a framework to enable real action through the Commission. While criminal justice was a pressing issue in the discussions it was felt that this had been an area of focus for the borough's Community Safety Partnership Board and a review was being undertaken concurrently by the Youth Justice Board and therefore due to the limited capacity of the Commission this would not be in scope.

The Commission was formally launched in September 2020 by Mayor John Biggs with Commissioners selected to bring expertise, skills and networks on the areas of focus, with a clear role description to help them fulfil their role. The council is determined to lead by example and pledges to ensure that Tower Hamlets Council is an anti-racist organisation, leading in making the borough an anti-racist place. However, the council is unable to achieve this feat alone and needs the commitment, collaboration and support from leading organisations in the borough as well as residents.

BOROUGH ETHNICITY PROFILE

More than two-thirds (69%) of the borough's population belong to a minority ethnic group. Tower Hamlets is ranked as the 16th most ethnically diverse local authority in England out of 325 local authorities.

The borough's two largest ethnic groups are the White British and the Bangladeshi populations, each accounting for one third of the population. Tower Hamlets has the largest Bangladeshi population in the country

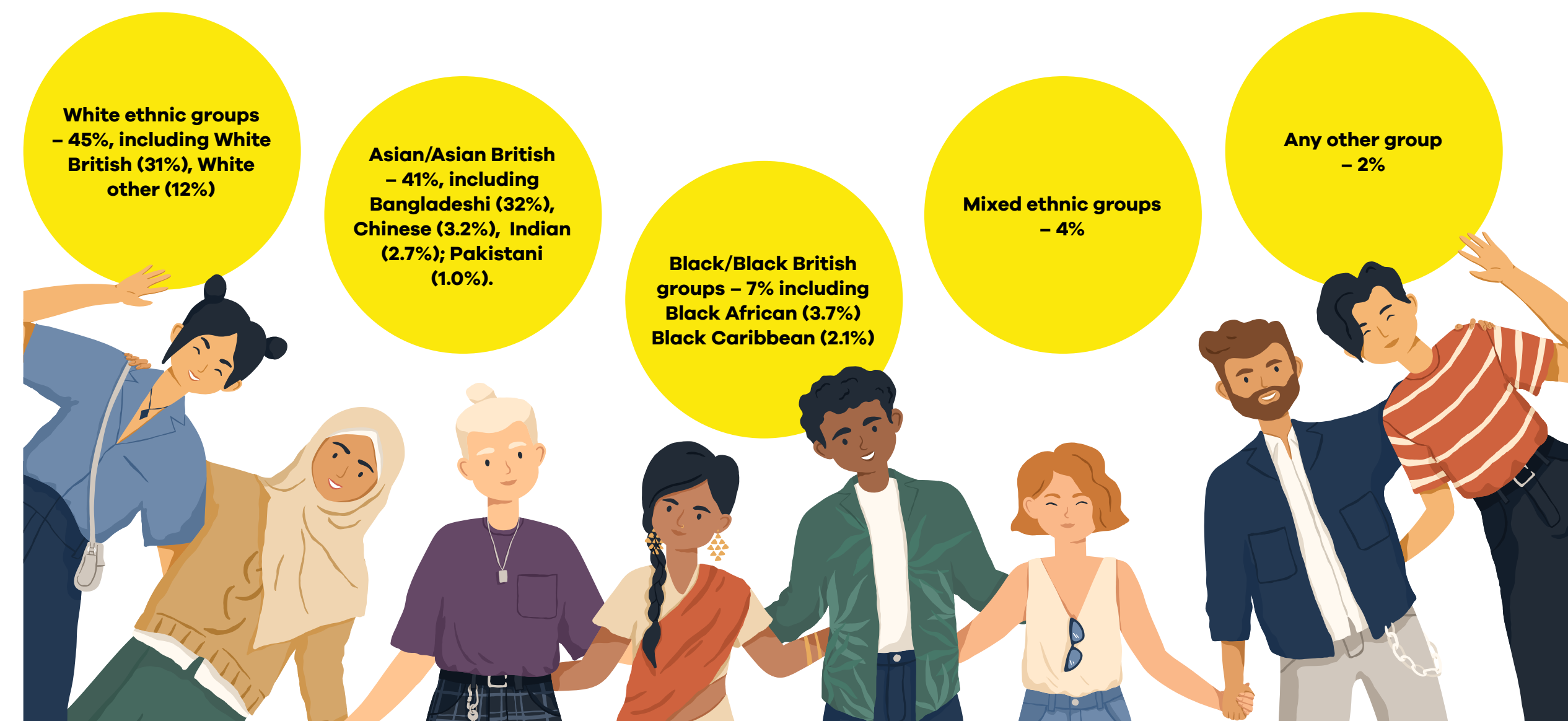
The third largest group is the White Other population, who account for 12% of the borough's population. This group is diverse and includes residents from a mix of ethnic backgrounds, Europeans, Australians and Americans.

A significant proportion of the borough's population are Somali, and they are the borough's largest Black group. The 2011 Census identified 2,925 Somali-born residents, 1.2% of the population. The overall size of the Somali population in the borough, including subsequent and second generations, is considerably larger, between 6,000 and 9,000 or 2-3% of the population.

- 70% of children and young people aged 0-24 are from a non white group.
- Bangladeshi residents made up almost half of all 0-24 year olds (46%) in Tower Hamlets compared with a third (32%) of all residents.
- The proportion of Black residents aged 0-24 (8%) was slightly higher than the proportion of all residents from Black ethnic groups (7%), while residents from mixed ethnic backgrounds aged 0-24 (6%) was higher than among the population as a whole (4%).

The Commission heard about the different experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in the borough. In particular, the experience of Tower Hamlets' Somali community was picked up and identified as being open to discrimination from other minority groups. This was most apparent in education, but it is likely to occur elsewhere. Somali parents, who have experienced discrimination, despair at the constant criminalisation of their children based on racist attitudes and behaviour. There are limited numbers of Somali staff in schools to understand the needs of Somali families and their children. We also recognise that our Somali community is not accessing pathways into employment as effectively as other ethnic minority communities, including through government led schemes. Their needs to be better representation in frontline services, with relatable peers that inspire the community

The council working with partners is committed to delivering an extensive programme of improvement for the Somali Community. The work with the Somali Task Force is continuing through the Somali Working Group¹. Through the implementation of the Task Force recommendations significant progress has been made and a recognition that more needs to be done which will be taken forward by the Somali Working Group.



¹https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/community_and_living/Somali_Task_force.aspx

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Commission aimed to deliver tangible and practical actions which will deliver real change to the lives of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, and allow the council and partners to champion the enormous impact these communities have had on the borough.

The Commission was shaped by three objectives:

ENGAGEMENT

Engage and operate at the heart of Tower Hamlets' communities to hear about people's lived experience and solutions, specifically Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women and young people who experience higher levels of inequality

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Work with institutions to advance and prioritise race equality to achieve an inclusive, cohesive, thriving and representative Tower Hamlets

INFLUENCE CHANGE

Influence local, sub-regional and regional leaders who have significant influence on Tower Hamlets, particularly in the development of policy and strategy practices and the allocation of resources

APPROACH AND DELIVERY

The Commission's work was conducted over four months, with the council website and social media channels used to provide information about the Commission and how to get involved. Evidence was collected through four formal hearings which engaged 27 key witnesses. The Commission placed an emphasis on capturing the lived experiences of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents and heard from 87 people through six focus groups with different sectors of the community. The Commission also received 78 written submissions from residents and organisations in the borough. Finally, the Commission considered previous and recent studies and reviews into race inequality both regionally and nationally.

The recommendations set out in this report will be delivered through the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group. The council will assume a lead role and will act as a facilitator to engage and support partners in both the public and private sector to respond to these recommendations. However, achieving true equality in the borough is not a feat the council can achieve alone, and the collective efforts of all partners is critical in ensuring the successful implementation of these recommendations. The Commission therefore recommends that a sub group of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group be established to lead on delivery of the recommendations and work with the voluntary and community sector Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network to ensure the voice of the community is reflected in the delivery.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The first session considered the barriers preventing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people from engaging with their community and assuming positions of leadership. The Commission engaged with local organisations to explore how they are creating leadership opportunities and how they can be supported to deliver more. In their exploration of community leadership, the Commission met with residents and considered the issue of the minority within the minority, focusing on how women, young people, and smaller Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups can be engaged. The Commission listened to evidence from the GP Care Group, LBTH Children Services, Poplar Harca, Black Training and Enterprise Group, Tower Hamlets CVS and the Head of School for GP Training for North East and Central London. The Commission also held a focus group with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women's group and school governors.

HEALTH

The second thematic meeting considered whether racial biases in health care provision is preventing access and improvement to health outcomes. The Commission also considered the communication needs of different communities to understand what further action is needed to improve trust and access issues. The Commission heard evidence from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, Local Medical Committee, East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), Barts Health NHS Trust, and Apasenth. The Commission also held a focus group with health patients and social care users.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The final two thematic sessions considered the barriers faced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic school, college and university leavers in accessing good employment, and racial bias during the selection process. Moreover, the Commission heard from employers and employees in public and private sector organisations to understand the barriers preventing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people from progression into senior leadership positions. In the education session, the Commission heard evidence from Runnymede, two former students who have recently gained employment, Swanlea School, Queen Mary University and East London Business Alliance. The Commission also held a focus group with young people which was chaired by the Deputy Young Mayor. In the employment session, the Commission heard evidence from Tower Hamlets council, Metropolitan Police, Business in the Community, London Fire Brigade and State Street. The Commission also held a focus group with schoolteachers and employees from public and private sector organisations.

“There’s an ignorance and insensitivity towards cultural differences.”



2. GENERAL FINDINGS

RACISM

Following the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the summer of 2020, many witnesses who engaged with the Commission recognised it as a watershed moment. They noted an appetite for meaningful and lasting change in all facets of society, which hitherto did not exist. The Commission was informed that for many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, they were engaging in open, honest and challenging conversations about race with their White peers for the first time in their lives. These conversations acknowledged uncomfortable truths and it is therefore important for the Commission to recognise at the beginning of this report the pervasive nature of racism which exists in institutions and structures in Tower Hamlets.

The Commission heard many heart-breaking examples of racism and discrimination from residents and employees which has had a profound impact on them. It is a key barrier preventing access to services and progression in life and in employment. The Commission heard from:

- School teachers, afraid to share their identity, as they provided evidence detailing numerous examples of being overlooked for senior roles in favour of less qualified White peers.
- An employee in a large financial organisation who revealed a detailed analysis of his organisation's pay gap, disaggregated by ethnicity, revealed the 'darker the skin the wider the gap'.
- Witnesses who highlighted how the structural racism within the health landscape, and other structures in the borough, have led to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people experiencing poorer health outcomes, being overexposed to COVID-19 and more likely to suffer the economic consequences of the pandemic.

This report provides further anecdotes and data which suggests that racism is still, unfortunately, a pervasive and insidious issue which needs to be addressed. The



Commission heard many examples of best practice which are shared in this report in the hope that other organisations will follow their lead. However, the pace of change is not fast enough and as the Commission makes its recommendations it is mindful that they must help accelerate the speed in which equity and improved outcomes are delivered to our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

The Commission noted the commitment and passion for change by all those it engaged and the need to build on this through a clear pledge for the borough. The pledge will form the basis of a strong commitment by organisations to ensure Tower Hamlets is an anti-racist place. It will provide a shared platform for support and challenge and deliver public accountability on progress. It was acknowledged that change will take time and it was important to continue the conversation about race equality beyond the lifetime of this Commission. Building on the council's commitment to lead in this area, the council should work with other councils and the Tower Hamlets Partnership to lobby government for action on race equality including greater social mobility given the links with poverty, as well as ways of nationally recognising achievements/driving up standards.

DATA AND TARGETS

From each of the thematic areas it was clear that there are a wide range of factors which contribute to inequality, and indeed many of the themes and findings are closely interrelated. This is perhaps most evident when the Commission considered terminology, data and targets. Many witnesses commented that they do not like the term 'BAME' which engulfs all minority groups, helps to mask the non-inclusion of specific ethnic groups and fails to recognise the nuances and uniqueness of each community. There is a national debate about this, and the Commission notes it is important that we locally start to identify and address the needs of each of these diverse groups and begin to treat them as separate and distinct.

Under the Equality Act 2010, organisations have a duty to collect and annually publish information which shows their compliance with the Equality Duty. It was striking that none of the witnesses the Commission engaged with referenced this. As the Commission interrogated each theme, it was apparent that many organisations rely on census data and the collation of detailed, disaggregated ethnicity data is sparse.

Good quality data is essential in designing better services which accurately respond to the needs of those who require them, reduce inequality through improving access and allow for targeted interventions. This is also emphasised in several national and regional reviews including recent studies looking at disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. The Commission, therefore, recommends organisations be more rigorous in the way they collect and analyse data. This will facilitate a better understanding of the areas of inequalities different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities are facing and inform the design and delivery of services for each community.

Targets were highlighted as a potential game changing action, but the Commission realises that it is a complex and nuanced intervention. Some witnesses acknowledged that young people believe in meritocracy and they are not comfortable knowing they have received an opportunity or promotion because of their ethnicity. This sentiment was also shared by participants of the employee focus group who labelled targets as 'tokenistic' stating that for targets to be effective, there needs to be greater transparency and communication of the reasons they are needed. The focus group

stressed that targets have the benefit of allowing more accessibility into roles, enabling Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees to secure roles they see career progression in. The focus group also noted that most targets they are aware of tend to be at senior levels. Progressive targets are needed to influence the growth and development of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees within an organisation, supporting them to reach executive levels.

The Commission heard from State Street, who demonstrated the significant strides they have taken to improve the diversity of their workforce through the collection of data and the use of aspirational targets which drives their leadership. They have set a target to triple their Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leadership and a target to double their representation across the entirety of their organisation over the next three years. This will ensure they have a diverse pipeline of employees to develop into the future leaders of the organisation. State Street highlighted that similar interventions to improve the gender composition of their senior leadership were successful and stressed the importance of collecting data to help understand the makeup of your population and drive change, noting, 'if you can't measure it, you can't change it' and 'what gets measured, gets done'.

The Commission endorses the McGregor Smith review, which underlined the need for ethnicity pay gap reporting and targets. The Commission is disappointed that neither of these are mandatory and will push for organisations in Tower Hamlets to lead the way in implementing this. Organisations must collect, scrutinise and be transparent with data and targets to help define how they are performing and demonstrate a meaningful commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Commission recognises the benefits targets can bring and calls on all organisations in the borough to set ambitious targets which are proportionate to the size of the organisation and the borough they serve.

REPRESENTATION

Lack of representation at all levels in society and in organisations is a critical barrier for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people accessing services and employment. The Race at Work Survey (which engaged 24,310 respondents) showed that only 33% percent of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people saw representation at the highest levels of their organisation². Noticeably, there was a distinct absence of senior Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leaders to invite to give evidence to the Commission, and even fewer when trying to identify female leaders. The Commission noted the absence of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community leaders, teachers, nurses, doctors, reception staff, school governors, Chief Executives and senior managers. Business in the Community echoed the findings and data presented in the McGregor-Smith review, informing the Commission that increasing levels of representation will not only better connect residents to vital services, but will also help to increase productivity and boost the economy by up to £24 billion a year.

There is an absence of people who understand the community they serve. This contributes to widespread mistrust in institutions, lack of role models and the provision of culturally inappropriate services. At the focus group with health patients, many highlighted that they do not see people from their community in senior positions or even in middle management. Many witnesses commented how they are often the only Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic face at the table when they attend meetings. Furthermore, they talked about feeling a sense of imposter syndrome on some occasions, as they feel like certain positions or environments ‘are not for them’. Teachers shared similar sentiments, noting that across the 71 primary schools in the borough, 1.6% of headteachers are Bangladeshi, 4.8% are Black, and 85% are White. At Deputy Head level, 9.6% are Bangladeshi, 3.8% are Black, and 84.6% are White. At Assistant Head, 13.6% are Bangladeshi, 1.6 % are Black, and 71.2% are White³.

Swanlea School emphasised the significance of representation and presented an awareness in this area which many other organisations can learn from. The School regularly reviews its workforce and noted the importance for a school where the majority of students are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, to look at the composition of staff and people in positions of authority to ensure it was diverse and signalled the right messages to its students. Similarly, they consider staff in lower positions such as cleaners, teaching assistants, dinner ladies, office staff and ensure they are not over-populated by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people. It’s a subtle message but one that is crucial in the perception of young people.

“The public sector already recruits BAME people into jobs – but are they able to stay in their job or develop into senior roles?”



² <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/race-at-work-charter-survey-report-2020>

³ Data provided by teachers that attended the focus group

INFLUENCE

Organisations in the public and private sector hold the ability to help shape and influence the equality policy and objectives of other organisations through their supply chains and their purchasing power. State Street stood out as an exemplar which other organisations must learn from. They informed the Commission that they will increase their spend with diverse suppliers across the globe in the next three years and are holding themselves accountable for strengthening Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic owned businesses.

In the past, State Street used their voting rights to successfully hold organisations to account if they did not have sufficient female representation on their boards. They have now written to the thousands of companies where they have voting rights and asked them to demonstrate what actions they are taking to increase Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation on their Board. If they have not taken steps to do so, State Street will refrain from voting.

Similarly, Barts Health NHS Trust have recognised the responsibility they have to ensure that their values are mirrored in their sub-contracted organisations. They have introduced constraints within their contracts which take account of how well organisations apply equal opportunities and have a diverse workforce. Many of the staff in their ancillary services are frontline, from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, and are exposed to the higher risks of COVID-19. The Trust has ensured that they are included in the risk assessments which have taken place for their staff.

The Tower Hamlets Partnership need to learn from these examples, reviewing their contract compliance to set out what senior staff should look like and implementing a contract of 'diversity compliance.' This needs to be a borough

wide approach, driven through the anchor institutions. The council can develop best practice guidelines for every organisation to follow. Successful bidders must be able to evidence their commitment to diversity and inclusion and this will be considered during commissioning when tender submissions and/or grant funding submissions are assessed.



MISTRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Mistrust in institutions, and particularly in policing, was repeatedly mentioned by witnesses as an issue which has a profound impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The Commission is pleased that the Metropolitan Police engaged in an open way and in a robust and honest conversation, because without this we cannot make progress. The Commission acknowledges that significant progress has been made by the local police to build community relations and work with local partners to address community concerns. Local Police are a key part of the borough's partnership and play a crucial role in improving outcomes for local residents. While the Commission did not have the opportunity to hear from the local police leaders, it was noted that they do have a number of projects to engage the local community through ward panels, local policing and schemes to support people into careers in policing.

Despite this, it was noted that some individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities do not apply to work for the police because they feel a lack of trust in the Police and think that their friends and family will treat them differently. The Commission believes that representation at all levels within the police is vital to create better connections with communities and facilitate greater levels of trust. There is more work required in the recruitment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic police officers and emphasis needs to be placed on the retention of these officers once they have been recruited. The Commission recognised that interventions are in place to address this, but the pace of change needs to be faster. It was pleasing to note that there are a substantial number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic applicants currently in recruitment pipeline and it is hoped this will result in more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Police Officers working in London and Tower Hamlets.

On policing, the Commission invited representatives from the Metropolitan Police Central Inclusion and Engagement team as the focus of the session was on employment. The Commission was pleased to hear that the Police are trying to ensure sufficient support is in place to help retain officers, including mentoring and strategically placing officers so they can be better prepared to move through the ranks, and ensuring they are well insulated from any bias which takes place within the organisation. The Commission also supports initiatives for their media department to promote more positive images, particularly of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic officers

working in the community. The Commission welcomes the fact that the police are undergoing unconscious bias training and working with leading academics and practitioners to help officers put their own experiences to one side in order to understand and filter new information, breaking down deeply engrained bias. This will not only help them as an employer, but also in the way they police the streets and interact with residents.

However, it is clear there is still significant work to do to attract and retain Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic police officers. From the Commission's evidence gathering, it was concerning to hear that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Police Officers need better legal assistance to support them when they experience discrimination in the workplace and more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in the Metropolitan Police Federation (MPF) is needed. It is the Commission's view that without adequate representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Officers in the MPF, the current cohort of MPF leaders will not be able to effectively represent and advocate for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic officers as they fail to comprehensively understand the nuances of the discrimination individuals are facing.

Equally concerning were comments that many in supervisory positions do not feel empowered to make the right decisions to support their colleagues when they report workplace discrimination through fear of being ostracised by colleagues. There needs to be better scrutiny of internal complaints and how they are investigated as often, complaints are investigated, and the results end up in favour of



the perpetrator. Unless an officer is prepared to fund their claim themselves than they often end up leaving the organisation. If officers do not have the ability to challenge discrimination through correct and appropriate processes, then the change which is needed will never be delivered.

Whilst we heard powerful evidence in relation to experiences within the police force, this theme of lack of support to complain and pursue grievances by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people was repeated in employment focus groups and written submissions from employees working in other sectors across in the borough. The Commission believes that all employers must have fair and transparent grievance processes that are free of discrimination and racial bias; but acknowledges that this is most strongly needed in those sectors that have the biggest impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people's lives.

Often, mistrust in institutions is developed at a young age and can have a perpetual impact on an individual's life, preventing them from accessing key services. The Black Training and Enterprise Group presented that there are far too many stop and searches of young black and Muslim men, and they work with many clients who have suffered a significant psychological impact from this which leads to them feeling disconnected.

East London NHS Foundation Trust detailed a project looking at how young Black males engage with their service, many of whom do not voluntarily access their services for help and experience the same journey through the system. Significantly, black people are over four times more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 and over ten times more likely to be subject to a community treatment order, with young black men more likely to be sectioned than other groups⁴. In many cases, problems begin when they are approaching the end of primary school and at a point when they are more likely to be excluded and start to encounter different challenges. This follows into secondary school where the police start to play a role and already children are placed into a position where institutions and services have not catered for their needs.

Subsequently, when they start to feel symptoms which would require them to visit a GP or mental health service, they are unlikely to do this, exacerbating their health issues further until they are forced into institutions by the criminal justice system. This begins a different relationship where an individual enters a mental health service under duress and is more likely to be secluded, given higher doses of medication, and restrained. Once again, this has created the cycle of mistrust in institutions and services to the extent that when people are discharged, they are less likely to engage and even if they do seek help, they are not always given the option of talking therapies. The Commission endorses the proposals to introduce culturally appropriate advocates as part of reforms to improve the Mental Health Act which will empower people to have more control over their treatment and allow people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to be better supported by people who understand their needs.



“We need to take complaints seriously and understand that some conditions can present differently in non-white people.”

⁴ Mental Health Act Statistics, Annual Figures England, 2018-19, <https://files.digital.nhs.uk/00/66FBD2/ment-heal-act-stat-eng-2018-19-summ-rep.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL	
Anti-Racist Borough	Organisations within Tower Hamlets commit to becoming an anti-racist borough. This will include a commitment to work at pace to address inequality and access to services. It will recognise the individual needs of each Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community and it will be delivered through a race equality pledge, race equality network, challenging targets, disaggregated data, increased representation and better utilisation of an organisation's influence through its supply chains, employment practice and services.
Race Equality Pledge	Organisations in Tower Hamlets, especially those that comprise the strategic partnership and work in partnership with the council, sign up to a shared commitment on race equality by the end of 2021. Organisations who sign up to this pledge will support and deliver the commitments set out in the Commission's recommendations. This will enable greater collaboration and support between organisations and strengthen accountability and transparency of commitment and progress. As part of this recommendation, a local award scheme should be established which recognises best practices amongst organisations and individuals. The council and partners should lobby national and regional organisations to set up a high-profile national recognition programme to recognise achievement and drive up standards.
Race Equality Network	A partnership Race Equality Network be developed that monitors the delivery of the Commission's recommendations, influences policy and decision making and enables a safe place for on-going conversation about race equality in Tower Hamlets and drive improvements.
Targeted Interventions	In delivering the recommendations of the Commission, organisations should recognise the variety and nuances within the needs of the borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and tailor interventions which address the challenges facing each community, recognising that at present the Somali Community is the biggest Black community.
Targets	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must set ambitious targets for addressing inequalities which deliver real change and year on year progress. Organisations must use effective performance management to monitor progress and report publicly.
Data	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must collate, disaggregate and analyse data in a granular way to understand areas of inequalities facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. This data should be disaggregated to ensure we understand needs of different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.
Influence	Organisations signing up to the Race Equality Pledge must utilise their influence with contractors, those they give grants to and work in partnership to ensure they comply and meet the standards of the borough equality pledge.

3. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Community Leadership is the golden thread which stretches across the Commission’s priority areas. To ensure racial justice in all aspects of life, the Tower Hamlets Partnership needs to ensure that at every level where power is held and in every way it is exercised in the community, it includes Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic voices. The Commission noted the progress made over the years with representatives involved in a range of roles including within the council, schools, NHS and community organisations.

The Annual Residents’ Survey 2019⁵ provides an indication of residents’ views of the borough and their involvement within the community. The 2019 Survey found the following:

	Satisfied with area as a place to live	People from different backgrounds get on well together	Feel I can influence decisions	Volunteering in Tower Hamlets in last 12 months
White	74%	79%	52%	15%
Mixed	53%	70%	47%	30%
Asian	67%	78%	50%	17%
Bangladeshi	66%	67%	49%	17%
Black	70%	75%	55%	13%
Others	67%	74%	67%	26%
BAME	66%	77%	52%	17%

- There was a difference of up to 21% between different ethnic groups in terms of being satisfied with Tower Hamlets as a place to live. This was highest amongst residents of White ethnicity (74%) and lowest amongst residents of Mixed ethnicity (53%).
- There was a difference of up to 12% between residents of White ethnicity (79%) and residents of Bangladeshi ethnicity (67%) in terms of agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- Encouragingly, residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds were equally likely to feel that they could influence decisions with 52% agreeing with that statement.
- Residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (17%) were slightly more likely than residents of White ethnicity (15%) to have volunteered within the borough, but residents of Black ethnicity were the least likely to have volunteered (13%)

⁵ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Annual_Residents_Survey.aspx

3. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Government's Race Disparity Audit⁶ found that Black adults were among the most likely to participate in some form of formal volunteering on a regular basis, which involves providing unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations at least once a month. One in four Black adults and almost as many White adults regularly participated in formal volunteering in 2016-17, and they were more likely to do so than those of Asian or Mixed ethnicity, of whom around one in six volunteered formally on a monthly basis. There were marked differences between ethnic groups in the extent to which people felt able to influence local decisions, with Black adults feeling the most able to influence them and White adults, the least. In 2016-17, 44% of Black adult agreed they could influence decisions affecting their local area, compared with 25% of White adults.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation study into community engagement and cohesion in England⁷ concluded that ethnic minority communities are particularly at risk of not having their views heard effectively including migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers. Barriers cited include difficulties in the use of English, lack of information on engagement opportunities and time. Significantly, it was noted that these barriers are exacerbated by the growing fluidity and fragmentation of governance structures. For new arrivals, the shifting landscape of service provision and governance is even more bewildering, making community engagement correspondingly more problematic.

⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686071/Revised_RDA_report_March_2018.pdf

⁷ <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/community-engagement-and-community-cohesion>



DATA, TARGETS AND AWARENESS

Feedback from witnesses highlighted lower levels of representation and a general lack of awareness of the opportunities available to engage in positions of community leadership. The issue of ‘privilege’ was highlighted as most Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people do not have early access to resources, networks and confidence to navigate opportunities. More needs to be done to communicate the possibilities available and encourage, empower, and support those from underrepresented groups into positions of leadership, whether it be in schools, community groups, magistrates, NHS Boards, company boards, governors or local councillors.

Community leadership needs investment and there needs to be a systemic plan which maps how this can be resourced and implemented across the borough. Poplar Harca highlighted promising projects delivered by organisations in the borough to improve residents’ engagement often fail due to a lack of resources or staff turnover. A long-term vision to create a system of support for community leadership, which will not necessarily realise results instantly, is required. This may involve Chief Executives of key anchor organisations in the borough making a commitment to support and empower leaders.

Currently, there is a distinct absence of a plan or vision and defining what good looks like in this area needs to be the starting point. There must be a clear objective and commitment which states what Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people engaging in their community and assuming leadership positions in Tower Hamlets looks like. This combines with issues of insufficient data as it’s hard to know what good looks like, or how close the borough is to achieving it, without the data to tell us. For example, anecdotal evidence details that the Black community in the borough is not well represented in leadership positions, but comprehensive data is needed to highlight where the gaps are and where interventions must be targeted. The Commission would like within a year, organisations in Tower Hamlets to understand how many positions are available across the borough and set ambitious targets to ensure these are reflective of the community.

RECOMMENDATION :

Awareness

Develop and deliver a targeted communications campaign to raise awareness of opportunities available which includes profiling of other black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents who have succeeded and made significant contributes. Organisations must demonstrate where they are now and evidence year on year progress.

“We need to show people that their contributions - large or small - are important and valued”



YOUNG PEOPLE

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Young people must be engaged and developed to ensure that they are ready to assume leadership positions in the community. The current generation of young people offer the opportunity for generational change. They are dynamic, smart, politically aware, full of ideas and innovation; however, we need to provide fertile ground to develop them and ensure the infrastructure is in place to support them to engage in their community. There are already several encouraging projects underway to support this and promising signs from the borough's young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities that they are ready and willing to engage. The council's strategy for children and young people places empowerment as priority and their voice should be influential in service design and delivery. Tower Hamlets has a longstanding and vibrant Youth Council and the current composition of it is all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Tower Hamlets also has a very active Children in Care Council which is made up of representatives from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

A significant barrier for children and young people engaging in the community is poverty. Tower Hamlets has the highest rate of child poverty in the country and the impact of this is felt largely by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. There are strong links between advantage and opportunity which means that children from

disadvantaged backgrounds do not benefit from the same social capital as those from advantaged backgrounds. Access to social capital is a theme which is at the forefront of each of the Commission's priority areas and is particularly evident when considering education and the barriers into good employment. The council and its partners need to develop a corporate parent approach whereby they make their networks available to deprived Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and connect them with better resources which will provide opportunities for development.

It was also noted by some witnesses that there are internal barriers within communities restricting new voices from being heard. In some cases, older, conservative voices are threatened by young and innovative voices. Further work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities is required to ensure there is a diverse range of voices within the makeup of the borough's community leaders and there is a clear pathway for young people to engage.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Organisations must create the environment for their employees and residents to engage in their community and they need to review how they shape routes into community leadership through volunteering programmes, through their governance structures and in scrutiny of their work. The Commission heard from Poplar Harca who recognised the importance of making room for development and being active in the local community, encouraging all their staff to do this. They also lean on the borough's young people and engage them to run many community events and interact with issues which are most important to them.

It is not simply enough to engage or recruit people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. They must be supported and provided with meaningful opportunities to impact their communities. Organisations across the borough must scrutinise themselves to ensure they are doing all they can to enable people to have a voice and engage in decision making. This includes a clear commitment with set of actions to address inequality and on-going review and platform to discuss and challenge progress. Unfortunately, the current sentiment of some of the witnesses suggests their engagement has no impact. School Governors shared their experiences and felt that their involvement was tokenistic and became disempowered once they were on the Board. Moreover, the Black Training and Enterprise Group reported that public bodies do not value the contribution of leaders as much as they should, and some Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents are disengaged when they see community leaders struggle to be heard by those in power.

"People of all races need to feel that they can contribute"



RECOMMENDATION :

Organisational Culture

Organisations must create a culture which values diversity and provides the space and environment which enables Black, Asian and Min people to develop into community leadership roles within the governance of the organisation.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

There is a substantial role for the voluntary sector to play in supporting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities into leadership positions, both in terms of providing residents with the training and development for them to succeed and also in ensuring their organisations are representative. There is currently insufficient data on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leadership or the ethnic profile of the workforce in voluntary organisations. Data needs to be collected within the voluntary sector to enable the council and its partners to map the resources and networks operating in the borough's communities.

The Commission was pleased to hear that Tower Hamlets CVS (THCVS) is working with partners to build greater community leadership. Currently, only 20% of the organisations THCVS work with are led by a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic person. THCVS are developing a peer network for women, providing funding to support community start-ups and building capacity of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community groups. Furthermore, in response to COVID-19, they are working with Public Health on a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic leadership programme.

There is a direct link between supporting and growing the voluntary sector and developing new community leaders. The Tower Hamlets Partnership need to ensure voluntary sector organisations have the resources, support and appropriate developmental plans in place to provide people with the capacity, skills and experience needed to succeed.



MENTORING AND ALLIES

Mentoring and support networks are important to encourage confidence in people taking community leadership positions. Many witnesses highlighted a lack of time, skills deficit, and poverty as key barriers preventing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents from engaging with their community. Some witnesses commented that they saw themselves as ‘parents and not as black leaders,’ illustrating that they do not have the time to engage and/or they don’t have the confidence to engage. Significantly, school governors informed the Commission that they were not provided with effective support to succeed in their role and suggested that a network of community leaders who can discuss challenges and share advice would help to give them the skills and confidence to succeed. The Tower Hamlets Partnership need to train a pool of potential leaders from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and use local initiatives to support them into positions. Additionally, they need to consider civic leadership projects run by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic organisations.

It is important that the development of networks and mentors is not grown exclusively within Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. People from White communities need to be empowered to become allies and create effective networks with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities which can be used to leverage support and help deliver sustainable change.

“Community leadership should make sure that no one is left behind.”



RECOMMENDATION :

Role Models and Allies

That local people are empowered to become role models and allies as visible inspiration and create effective networks for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to leverage support.

Training, Development and Peer Support

Organisations should provide support, training, mentoring and development opportunities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals to access leadership roles and be effective in these roles, with a specific focus on a programme for young people. This needs to be at every level from entry to moving into senior roles such as chairs.

4. HEALTH

There are significant disparities in health outcomes for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Data collated by general practices shows the prevalence of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic kidney disease and asthma all to be higher for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Significantly, many of these conditions are linked, meaning that the combination of these conditions place a higher burden of multimorbidity on Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities than White groups are facing.

We know that housing conditions have a significant impact on residents' health. For example, asthma prevalence is higher for those in social housing, housing in multiple occupation, poor quality living environments, smoking households, benefits households or if you are on the housing waiting list⁸. The council has the 7th highest waiting list



“Healthcare workers assume we aren’t educated and don’t involve us in discussions about our care.”

nationally. There are 18,808 households on the council’s housing waiting list . Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic households account for 78% of all households on the housing register. We also know that many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic households are living in overcrowding, with 31% of Asian/Asian British and 19% of Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British households living with fewer bedrooms than required compared to 8% of White households.

Unfortunately, it is now too clear that COVID-19 has a disproportionate impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. In Baroness Doreen Lawrence’s review of the impact of COVID-19 she highlights how Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people have been overexposed and under protected and attributes the horrific impact of COVID-19 to the culmination of decades of structural injustice and discrimination. Many of the health issues which have arisen were not born out of COVID-19 but were pre-existing, socio-economically patterned, and exposed by the pandemic, and described by Baroness Lawrence as ‘foreseeable and inevitable’⁹.

This is supported by the Public Health England ‘Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups’ report¹⁰. This review found that the pandemic has exacerbated longstanding inequalities affecting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in the UK and highlighted the strong association between economic disadvantage and COVID-19 diagnoses, incidence and severe disease. Given the level of deprivation and health profile of many of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, it contextualises the significant risk our residents face. The Commission noted the findings from both these reviews and expects local organisations to take forward the recommendations. In recognition of this, the Commission narrowed its focus on health to access and communication, and the impact of racism, with the emphasis on hearing local peoples lived experienced on these two areas.

⁸ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Borough_profile.aspx

⁹ <https://www.lawrencereview.co.uk>

¹⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

ACCESS AND COMMUNICATION

Many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents expressed concerns about access to health services, with many reporting experiences of unconscious bias among health care workers. There is a distressing issue of a lack of trust and confidence in the health sector because of this. In the focus group with health and social care users many highlighted significant barriers preventing them from effectively accessing health services including communication, access to translation services, lack of representation and digital exclusion.

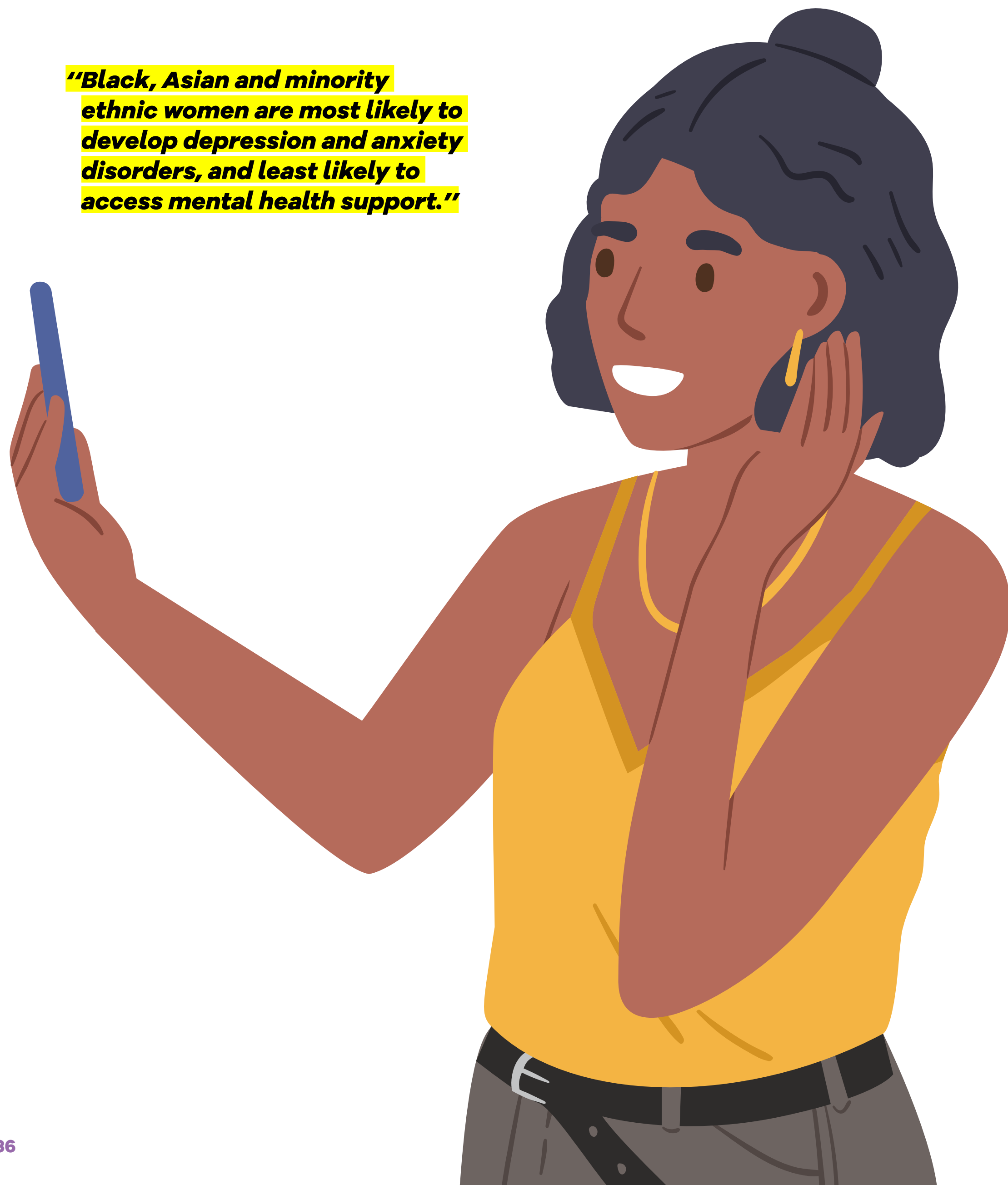
Healthwatch Tower Hamlets informed the Commission that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents reported poorer experiences of health and social care services than White British residents; with many reporting long waiting times to access care. In a survey conducted with 704 residents, 64% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents were confident they could access physical and mental health services regardless of their identify compared to 74% White British people, 62% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people felt they could access safe and high quality services when they needed them compared to 70% White British people, and 68% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people were confident that those providing their care are competent, happy and kind compared to 78% of White British people.

Many witnesses highlighted language barriers, poor translation and lack of culturally appropriate services as a significant barrier. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups are more likely to speak limited English and therefore face systemic and complex barriers to accessing primary and other healthcare services. Interpreters are not always available, particularly at short notice. Booking and triage systems in general practices rely on online symptom checkers, online booking and doctor-led telephone call back which are challenging for patients with a low level of English and lack of digital skills and tools. This has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where an increased number of general practices have adopted this model.

“Using terms such as ‘minority’ can mean that people are viewed as being ‘less than’.”



“Black, Asian and minority ethnic women are most likely to develop depression and anxiety disorders, and least likely to access mental health support.”



Even when residents have access to an interpreter (professional or family), people who speak limited English can face challenges. Due to time pressure and cultural barriers, patients may find it harder to communicate with doctors. Patients may feel reluctant discussing sensitive topics such as sexual or mental health in front of family members or people they know acting as interpreters. Interpreters need to be independent and specially trained. Witnesses noted that over time there has been several forms of interpretation and advocacy schemes in Tower Hamlets. However, over the years, in periods of austerity, these services have been reduced, as opposed to more essential clinical services, and the level of service has gradually deteriorated. A shift to more digital services provides opportunities to improve provision, as specialist interpreters will not need to be based in the borough to do their job effectively. This needs to be explored and balanced against the digital literacy needs of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population.

It is imperative that translation and advocacy services receive funding in order to enhance the link between institutions and communities and improve the access issues many communities are facing. The inadequacy of translation services and appropriate communications strategies targeting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities was one of the most widely reported institutional failures cited in our interviews. The government should act on this area by commissioning a review of the availability of translation and advocacy services, working with community groups and Healthwatch England. It is important that this is not just about the provision of written translation as sometimes literacy is poor. Some people can speak the language but reading it may still be difficult. More advocates with the language skills to help Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communicate with people within NHS are required.

Additionally, if the Tower Hamlets Partnership can support people to speak and learn English they can engage more in all areas of society which impact them, such as a school governor or community leader. Closer working with voluntary and community sector organisations, supported by targeted funding and resources, would provide an immediate opportunity to co-produce community-facing COVID-19 messaging and secure the rapid availability of translation services. Locally we need agreed target spends by the NHS on such services which should be protected spends.

Many witnesses reported that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents are more likely to be digitally excluded (either through low IT literacy or lack of access to devices). Additionally, many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities live in multigenerational households which can be overcrowded and restrict people from having open conversations when their family is close by and they are required to do an online consultation. This is also supported by two research reports by Healthwatch Tower Hamlets on digital inclusion which found Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community amongst group that are more likely to be digitally excluded and in need of support of accessing through digital means. The council and its partners need to ensure access to services is fair and equal. One possible option may be to utilise voluntary sector buildings to hold more intimate and confidential conversations in privacy.

The Commission heard through formal meetings and a focus group that the current communication channels and methods do not always reach our diverse communities. Most communication is only in English which excludes people with language barriers. At the focus group it was suggested that using videos in different community languages will reach vulnerable groups who may need to rely on their children and others to provide information. It was clear that local health organisations need to work with the community to develop their communication and engagement strategies, ensuring guidance and important messages are culturally appropriate, available in different languages and mediums and utilise different approaches to mitigate fears and mistrust.

During the focus group with patients and service users, many voiced their frustration and mistrust in services caused by low levels of representation. A Somali resident told the Commission that 'it is hard to find a receptionist who speaks Somali let alone find a nurse or a doctor who is Somali.' He noted that if he looks at his White 80-year-old neighbour, she can visit her own general practice without hesitation because she knows she can find someone at the reception who can speak her own language. On the contrary, 'the Somali elderly woman will think twice or three times because she will not be able to find someone who will understand her'. Many of the people who attended the focus group previously relied on local voluntary and community organisations where they could be supported by community members speaking their own language and this meant that 'someone who came to this country had no problems getting their forms filled in'. Reductions in funding to these organisations have left many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents without any support to access key health services. The voluntary sector has a bigger role to play and the council and its partners need to consider how they can work across the partnerships to identify the organisations that have a wide reach amongst different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and resource them better to deliver essential provision.

RECOMMENDATION :	
Digital Exclusion	Organisations address digital exclusion facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities which is having an impact on their ability to access services, employment, engage in community life and their life outcomes.
Communication	NHS organisations review their communication and engagement strategy which ensures guidance and important message is culturally appropriate and available in different languages and uses different approaches to ensure message is reach to different audiences.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

There are stark disparities in health outcomes for the borough’s Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Clinical improvements and better access to services alone will not address these disparities. The Tower Hamlets Partnership must focus on addressing the elements of structural and institutional racism which has led to people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds positioned in the worse housing and employment and prevents them from achieving their full potential and best health.

The government, through the Health and Social Care Act 2012, required local areas to establish a Health and Wellbeing Board to work in partnership to reduce health inequalities. While our local Board has made progress in some areas given the impact of COVID-19 on our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities it is clear it has not been significant or the pace our residents rightly demand from us. Significantly, Barts Health NHS Trust informed the Commission that when patients present at the acute stage at the Royal London Hospital people from all ethnic groups are likely to experience the same outcome. It is not simply access to health care and treatment which needs to be improved, but also access to education, employment and housing

The links between health and housing were highlighted by witnesses as a key wider determinant of health which needs to be addressed. Many Black, Asian and Minority

Ethnic residents in Tower Hamlets live in poorer housing, which may be overcrowded, damp and in a state of poor repair. This has a significant impact on health outcomes. There are many housing issues within Tower Hamlets, with the number of people on the housing register significantly higher than the availability of affordable social housing. The borough has done good work to regulate the private renting sector and this is important to help address the supply and demand issues within social housing. Accepting the constraints of poverty and housing, the council and its partners need to identify what they can do within these parameters to help people achieve better health outcomes. For example, they need to ensure there are good quality open spaces for those in particular without their own garden or sufficient space within their home, or encourage people to have a better awareness of their health to seek interventions early and not be afraid of having conversations (especially where there are cultural stigmas).

While the work the Tower Hamlets Partnership has undertaken through the Health & Wellbeing Board is making progress to reduce health inequalities and the wider determinates of poor health, it was clear from the evidence the Commission heard that this has not been done at pace or been radical enough. The Commission therefore recommends that a review be undertaken of partnership governance structures and strategies to increase the pace of change and ensure this has long lasting impact

RECOMMENDATION :

Campaign & Social Determinants	Lead a high-profile local campaign for the government to provide adequate funding to address health inequalities and the social and economic factors.
Partnership	That partnership structures and strategies are reviewed to deliver radical changes at pace on the health inequalities challenge in the borough.
Research	The Health & Wellbeing Board, by the end of 2021, undertake detailed external research on causes of health inequalities amongst Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities which puts engagement of the community at the forefront of its work to identify issues and solutions.

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES

In addition to language barriers, many witnesses empathised cultural and health beliefs as a barrier to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic patients receiving the treatment they need. This links to the lack of representation as staff are unable to appreciate the culture of the people they treat. An observation made during the focus group with health patients stated that some practitioners have demonstrated unconscious bias including being dismissive of symptoms and not sympathetic of cultural norms. Written submissions received also highlighted peoples experience of being mistreated by reception staff which has a subsequent impact on an individual’s confidence to access services.

The Commission was informed of actions some services are taking to ensure they are culturally appropriate; however, this needs to be extended across all provision in the borough. The Commission was pleased to hear about the approach taken by Barts Health NHS Trust to listen, respond and work with local communities. Led by their community engagement group, they have increased the ways they listen to local people. They gathered a significant amount of anecdotal evidence of poorer experiences of people from ethnic minority communities, particularly the Somali community, and are acting on feedback to improve services. This has led to service adaptations including

accessible appointments and culturally sensitive communication. Several services have been transformed to ensure they are accessible for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. A common theme across each of these services is that they proactively reviewed their provision and involved local communities in educating and advocating on behalf of patients. The Trust recognised the need to put in place greater structures to ensure their work with the community is embedded and sustainable. To this end, they have appointed a new Director of Insight which will enhance their work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and improve patient experience.

General practices in Tower Hamlets have a diverse workforce which helps to cut across racism and cultural ignorance. General practices use the doctor’s toolkit to promote and educate people on issues such as access and they are making every effort to maintain non-digital access. The Commission notes that while the clinical side of the general practice is diverse, more work is needed to ensure the reception staff are trained to appreciate the cultural difference of patients. One member from the health patients focus group noted how a receptionist showed no regard for his privacy as she questioned him on his immigration status for the rest of the surgery to hear.

RECOMMENDATION :

Clinical Training	Review and strengthen clinical training in order to increase understanding of different cultural needs and deliver better health services to all communities.
Co-designed Services	That NHS organisation undertake meaningful engagement and involvement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in design, development and delivery of services. Health organisations need to improve the way services are understood and support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents so that they are empowered and confident to access them. This may mean they need to change the way that services are configured to make them more culturally appropriate.

ANTI-RACIST COMMITMENT

The evidence the Commission heard from local people about their experience of racism in NHS organisations it is clear that this is both pervasive and insidious which is having a detrimental impact on trust and relationship for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. This in turn is leading people not accessing health services or being supported to improve their health outcome. It was therefore, encouraging when many witnesses detailed how their organisations are amending their policies to encourage greater diversity and equality. Barts Health NHS Trust have made a clear public commitment to be an 'anti-racist organisation' and the Commission encourages more organisations to take similar action.

The Commission was informed of numerous changes they have made to demonstrate their commitment to this pledge. The Trust has challenged itself to do more on race inequality and tackle inequalities within the organisation and services they provide. They are taking direct action to create an organisational culture where everyone feels they belong and improve the experiences of their staff and patients from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, the Trust has revised its Human Resource processes including:

- recruitment and progression,
- diversity in senior leadership (currently 32.5% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic senior leaders, with an aim to increase to at least 56% by 2028),
- reverse mentoring programme for 200 staff,
- developing culturally intelligent leaders,
- eliminating discrimination in formal disciplinary processes,
- COVID-19 risk assessment for all staff and sub-contractors and a safety plan for all,
- psychologically safe workplaces,
- shared governance with staff so that colleagues affected by inequality share in the leadership and oversight of the change towards full inclusion.

"I want to make a difference as public services alone can't cater for the community."



Reducing inequalities experienced by staff and people using health and care services will require concerted action by the NHS, government, and wider public sector, working at scale and in a systematic and targeted way with communities. Integrated care systems have a key leadership role in this and must be supported to lead on this work.

It is important that organisations who make anti-racist pledges continuously, and transparently, demonstrate their commitment to this. The Commission highlighted the 'hostile environment' as one such area in which organisations can take actions in line with the spirit of their pledge. Currently, immigration health charging acts as a barrier restricting access and creating a sense of fear for the patient that they will be deported if they use a service. Failure to lift 'hostile environment' policies, such as eligibility checks and NHS charges for overseas visitors, was seen as a contributing factor to access. Concerns were raised over their potential to promote direct and indirect racial discrimination, deterring people from seeking care when needed, particularly among migrant and refugee communities.

To break down barriers to accessing healthcare, the government should take immediate steps to review the potential for hostile environment policies to be a vehicle for tackling institutional racism¹¹. It also feeds into a broader sense of confusion among both patients and providers who do not know which services are free and which services require payment. Some general practices require people to present documentation to prove who they are or where they live in order to sign up to a surgery when they are under no statutory obligation to do so. There needs to be widespread and constant education to ensure health workers are aware of cultural differences and migrants rights. Local NHS organisations should commit to continuously aim to reduce the profile of the checking it is statutorily required to undertake by lobbying Government to review its hostile environment policies.

In the short term organisations must ensure these policies are implemented in a sensitive and customer focused way, which, as the previous anecdote from a witness who was loudly questioned about his immigration status in the GP surgery revealed, is not always the case. They must also consider how these policies are implemented locally. This takes on added importance in a time of COVID-19. The hostile environment will make it more likely that marginalised sections of our community will not come forward for COVID-19 vaccines, if they believe by giving names and addresses, they will more likely be deported from the country.

¹¹ https://www.nhsconfed.org/-/media/Confederation/Files/Publications/Documents/Perspectives-from-the-front-line_FNL_Dec2020.pdf

RECOMMENDATION :

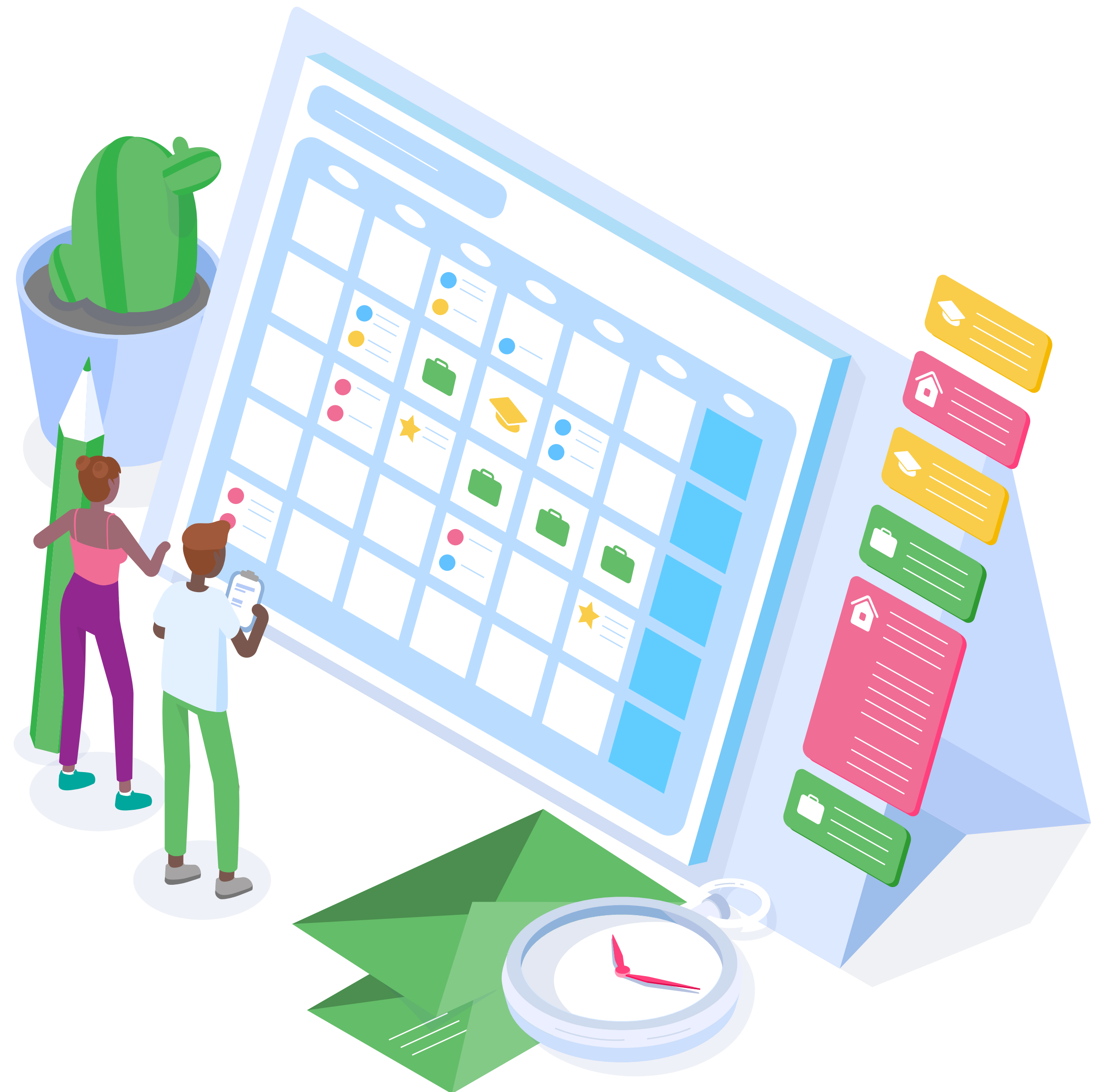
Hostile Environment

Local NHS organisations to lead a local campaign for the government to review hostile environment policies which seeks to reduce the profile of the checking of immigration status of service users it is statutorily required to undertake.

DATA AND TARGETS

As set out in the general findings section of this report collation of data which is broken down by different ethnic groups is important to understand and design interventions which meets the needs of the local community. The Commission noted good examples of some of this work around diabetes and vaccination. However, this is not widespread, and the Commission recommends that local health organisation must improve on this and collate data for all services to address health inequalities. This is consistent with the Public Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME group'.

Also as in the general findings section the Commission recommends that local NHS organisations set targets to improve diversity in their governance, and workforce management at all levels, while making it clear that "Black Faces in High Places" on its own is insufficient to eliminate structural racism. Every NHS organisation needs to profile its workforce at all grades and set targets about where they want to be in one year, three years, five years, and ten years.



5. EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION

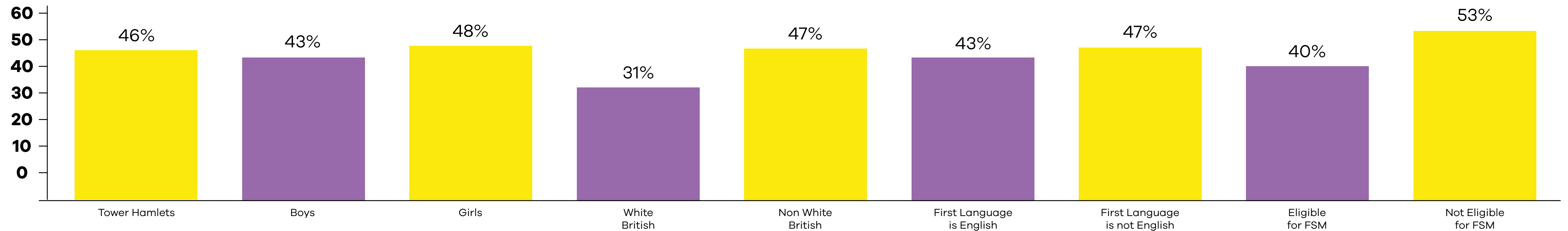
Despite high levels of deprivation and inequality, many of the borough’s Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students are achieving good qualifications at all key stages in primary and secondary education. The Commission heard from Swanlea School, where many students are high on the deprivation indicator and approximately 90% come from homes where English is not the first language. Despite these challenges, Swanlea’s Progress 8 scores are +0.84 which puts them in the top 120 schools in the country based on progress.

However, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students’ academic success is not translating into good employment. By ‘good employment’ we mean a position which recognises and uses the qualifications, knowledge and skills a person has developed. It is not acceptable to assume that as more people achieve good qualifications this will filter through into employment norms and practices. The problems are rooted deeper than this and are systemic. If it is left to ‘the passage of time’ there will be a generation of school leavers who are left without equitable support.

Attainment within schools is better for students from Non-White British backgrounds than for students from White British backgrounds and better for students whose first language is not English

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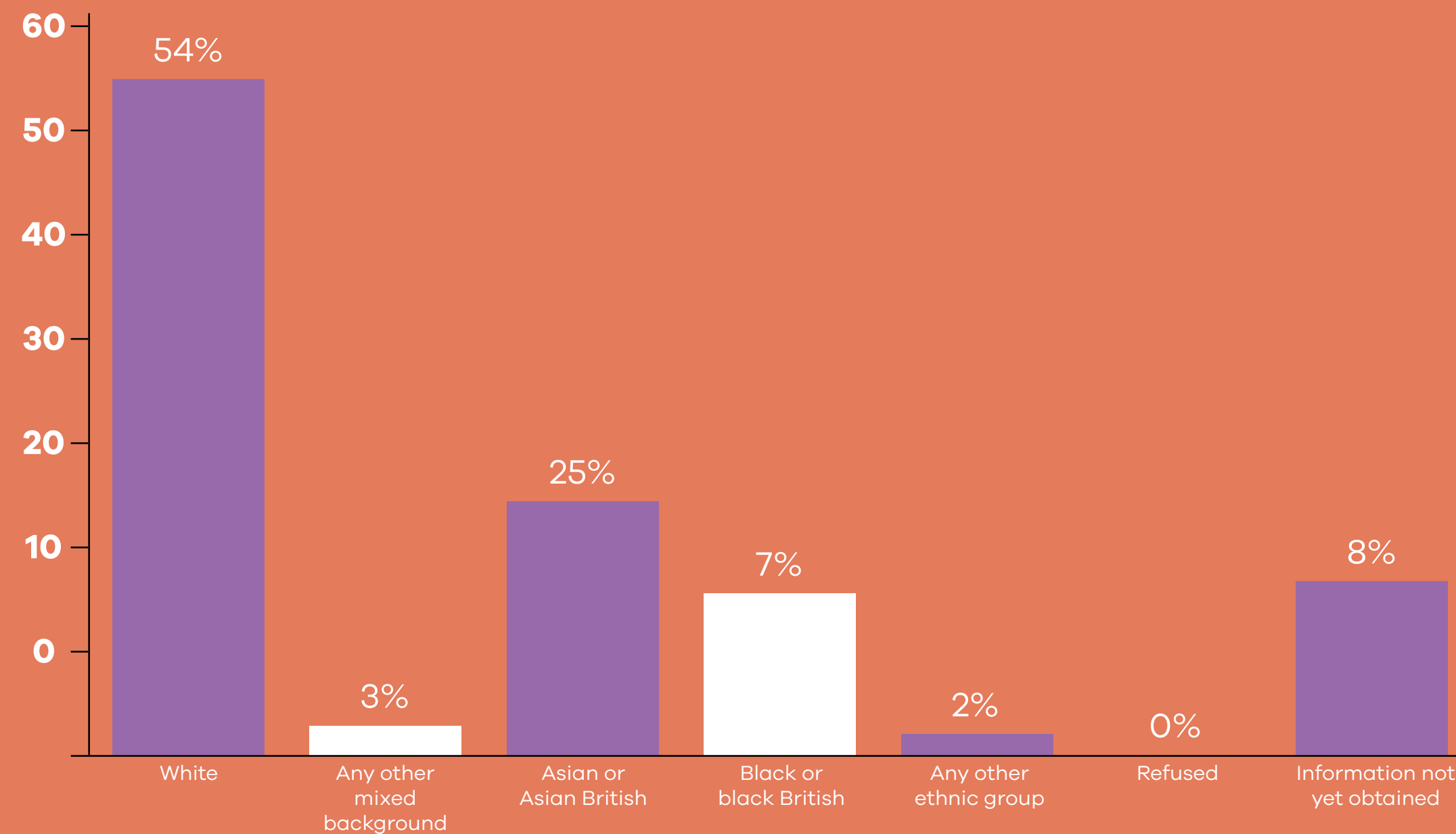
Key Stage 4 achieving strong pass 9 - 5 in English and Maths, 2019 (provisional)



KEY STATS

Whereas the large majority of pupils in Tower Hamlets schools are from Non-White backgrounds, over half of the teaching workforce are White.

Ethnicity of teachers in Tower Hamlets state funded schools as a percentage of total headcount, 2019/20:



- In 2018/19, 59.58% of young residents progressing to higher education were Bangladeshi, 15.94% were White, 9.7% were Black African and 4.62% were of Mixed ethnic origin.
- There was a sharp rise in higher education progression from young Bangladeshi residents between 2012/13 and 2015/16, but this has subsequently plateaued over the past four years.
- The proportion of young residents progressing to Russell Group institutions varied considerably. Whereas 60% of Chinese young people entering higher education went to a Russell Group institution, only 13% of Black Caribbean, 16% of Black African and no Black Other young people did so (the latter being a small sample size).
- 80% of graduating young Tower Hamlets residents of White ethnicity achieved a good degree in 2018/19 compared with 63.9% of Bangladeshi ethnicity, 70% of Black Caribbean ethnicity and 66.3% of Black African ethnicity.

AWARENESS RAISING AND PARENTAL BARRIERS

Many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people face cultural and parental barriers that the majority of their White peers do not have to navigate. For some students, parents do not want their children to move far from home when they go to university. Often, young people act as the adult in the family, have care responsibilities or are the only member of their family capable of accessing services. Furthermore, for many first and second generation Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority parents, they have parochial ideas about employment pathways and only place value in high-end professions such as medicine, law, banking or engineering. The council and its partners need to consider how they manage expectations and broaden young people's, and their parent's, choices without damaging their aspirations.

One witness who provided evidence to the Commission recently graduated from university and gained employment. She described the battle between cultural values as a challenge which not only impacted her outlook on career choices but also inhibited her views and actions in the professional setting. Through her own cultural experiences, she was taught not to speak up and always respect her elders and this minimised her voice. Another witness suggested conversations with schools are needed to better educate children on pathways into jobs. For example, it was pointed out that construction is a huge recruitment area, but many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities are not accessing these jobs.



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RECOMMENDATION :

Awareness

Educate parents, carers and children and young people on the range of career options available

SOCIAL CAPITAL, CONFIDENCE & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY

Witnesses highlighted the importance of social capital, confidence and extracurricular development. Many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds experience a lack of confidence and feel like they do not fit in or have the same experiences or networks as their more advantaged peers. This was certainly conveyed by the recent graduate. She was low in confidence, felt insecurities from her background and did not have the work skills employers look for, such as how to construct an argument, public speaking, critical thinking and creativity. This insecurity was particularly pressing when she attended university and was surrounded by peers who came from different backgrounds to her and had access to more social capital. She felt 'a sense of imposter syndrome' and felt that university 'was not for her'.

It is important to promote and profile working class and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic working-class leaders so they can signal to the rest of the population that it's ok to be who you are, and you can aspire to be a leader without having to code switch (adjust their style of speech, appearance, or behaviour, in order to improve their experience)

The lived experiences shared by recent graduates who met with the Commission was marked by the support and access they were given to greater social capital. The importance of connections, networks and informal connections was a similar and striking aspect in each of their journeys. One of the graduates participated in the East London Business Association (ELBA), Parity Project designed to support young Black men into work. It helped him to develop confidence and an understanding of how to act in a corporate setting. He developed a number of soft skills such as how to give a presentation, networking and relationship building skills. He was also given access to networks and organisations who presented him with employment opportunities in the finance sector which he would otherwise have found very difficult to access if left to navigate the employment landscape by himself.



Given the impact of limitations in social capital and confidence, the Commission was pleased to hear evidence from Swanlea School who described their work to build up students' soft skills and provide them with greater equity and social capital. Swanlea recognises that the curriculum is the starting point and the most powerful tool schools have to help drive social equality. This means students need a grounding in a diverse and high-level curriculum which doesn't compromise because they come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students who are not able to stand up as credible academics and representatives of excellence in their subject area will be exposed when they get to university and this links back to issues of self-esteem and confidence.

However, Swanlea have also placed an emphasis on creating a personal development and extracurricular programme which other schools can learn from. They took a decision that focusing on exam qualifications and the academic route alone was not effective enough to support children to thrive and progress in employment. There was a need to integrate this with employability skills and strengthen children's social capital. They have focused on students' self-leadership, confidence and resilience. Swanlea noted that as students may not have access to the networks that more advantaged students have, schools need to be more entrepreneurial and help create these networks. Swanlea have recruited dedicated 'Aspire Coordinators' who source opportunities and networks for their students to access. Many organisations have a social responsibility to integrate and work with the community and schools need to utilise this.

"You need to know where you're from, to know where you're going."



RECOMMENDATION :

Education Bursary Scheme	Building on existing bursary scheme the council works with local organisations to further develop this to support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students from low income family to progress into higher education and professional qualifications.
Recommendation: Leadership Development	Explore opportunities for local employers to come together and work with QMUL to develop a programme which supports Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people across different sector move into senior leadership positions.

EMPLOYMENT

- There is a difference of 27 percentage points between the Employment rate for White residents (81%) and the Employment rate for BAME residents (54%)
- The Employment rate for BAME women in Tower Hamlets is much lower than the employment rate of BAME women in London (38%- BAME women in Tower Hamlets, while 59% BAME women in London), leaving a gap of 21% points.
- The gender gap amongst the White population in the borough is far narrower than for BAME - 74%-White women vs 88% White men.
- In 2011, there were significant differences across different ethnic groups between the proportion of residents working in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations.
- Whereas, 65% of residents of White ethnicity who were in employment were in a professional or managerial occupation, this fell to 43% of Asian residents and 40% of Black residents.

The McGregor-Smith review¹² provides a clear roadmap for employers in the public and private sector to improve diversity within their organisations and ensure they offer a more equitable experience to their employees. The review calls for organisations to gather and publish better data, take accountability through aspirational targets and executive sponsorship, improve recruitment processes, improve supply chains, and raise awareness through unconscious bias training, mentoring and inclusive networks. The review also calls on the government to support organisations through legislative changes including the requirement to publish data i.e. ethnicity pay gap and work with Business in the Community and others to develop an online portal of best practice. It also calls for government to write to all institutional funds who have holdings in

FTSE companies and ask them for their policies on diversity and inclusion and how they ensure that the representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals is considered across the employee base of the companies where they hold investments.

In 2018, the Mayor of London launched the Workforce Integration Network. It is part of the Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration and aims to help employers tackle underrepresentation for different groups of Londoners. The Inclusive Employers Toolkit builds on this, providing practical guidance and encouraging employers to review their commitment to diversity, recruitment, retention and progression, and the diversity in their supply chain¹³. The toolkit specifically focuses on employers in construction and technology as these are two growth sectors of London's economy and will play a significant role in London's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Black men make up 4% of young men in construction and 5% of young men in technology.

The Race at Work Survey provides insight into the barriers facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees and shows a clear need to mobilise organisations to act. The survey of 24,310 responses highlighted:

- 52% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people felt they needed to leave their employer to progress.
- 70% felt progression is important to them
- 43% wanted to be fast-tracked however only 10% had been fast tracked
- 33% saw representation at the highest level within their organisation
- 38% felt their employer was comfortable talking about race and ethnicity and 22% were receiving help to talk about it
- 31% of Black employees wants a sponsor compared to 12% of White employees
- 33% of Black employees felt their ethnicity was a career blocker compared to 1% of White employees.
- 49% of Black employees felt they get credit for their work compared to 57% of White employees.
- 34% of Black people have to wait for more than three years to be promoted compared to 24% of other ethnicity groups.

¹² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf

¹³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/workforce-integration-network-win/inclusive-employers-toolkit>

¹⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/voices_of_the_underrepresented_fa.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.bitc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/bitc-report-race-raceatworkchartersurvey2020-Oct20.pdf>

EMPLOYERS AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Large organisations must look inwardly and consider their internal structures and role in nurturing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people into employment. Actions which focus on improving young people’s confidence, soft skills and social capital, place a higher burden on individuals. Whilst these are all important, without the systems issues being addressed first and the appropriate infrastructure put into place, efforts to increase the capacity of young people in education settings will not succeed as they will be met by the same barriers. The Race at Work survey illustrated the systemic blockages Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees feel. Progression was important to 70% of respondents however 52% felt like they needed to leave their organisation to progress.

Many young people in Tower Hamlets are left looking at Canary Wharf and City of London as two economic powerhouses that are beyond their reach. The council and its partners need to engage leaders in Canary Wharf and City of London and hold an honest conversation about what change is needed across the system to allow the required step change to take place. Large employers must consider how they can develop pipelines, structures and support to engage more young people in their workforce, and they must consider what they can do to accelerate the pace of change. There needs to be a systemic shift in the way organisations work. For example, the Canary Wharf Group has invested in redevelopment, housing and community projects but there has not been a structured conversation with all FTSE 100 companies in Canary Wharf to set out a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, at a systemic level, which will draw in young people from Tower Hamlets into their workforce. These organisations have huge CSR portfolios and there needs to be a direct conversation between them and the council to identify what needs to happen to give young people access to these organisations.

There is significant value in developing a partnership between schools and organisations in Canary Wharf and City of London to bring them into classrooms. This needs to be a structured and creative programme and it must not be a short-term investment and period of engagement. This needs to ensure that once companies engage schools they stick with young people as they go through their education journeys and provide a pathway into employment.

“We need to shake up the internal structures of organisations”



RECOMMENDATION :

Engage Canary Wharf and City of London

The Tower Hamlets Partnership to engage leaders in Canary Wharf and City of London to consider what they can do to accelerate the pace of change and develop a systemic plan to ensure the required step change to increase the representation of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority employees in senior positions within their organisations takes place.

ETHNICITY PAY DATA

The Commission reviewed the work the Bristol Race Equality Strategic Leaders Group¹⁶ who in taking forward the recommendations from the McGregor Review have looked at the race diversity of staff in public sector agencies across Bristol. They published reports which showed individual organisations and the collective race diversity of all public sector staff working in Bristol. This was compared to the population of Bristol to see how representative the public sector workforces are. The report includes:

- ethnicity of employees,
- differences in pay by ethnicity,
- sickness data by ethnicity,
- grievance and disciplinary by ethnicity.

In taking this work forward they have set up action groups made up of Directors and Senior HR leaders from the public sector organisations to look at the data findings. They'll work together to increase the diversity and improve the inclusion of staff across all organisations. The Commission expects as part of the Race Equality Pledge those organisations that are part of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Executive Group should commit to collectively publish workforce equality data with the first report published by the end of 2021.

"BAME people work twice as hard but that does not translate into senior positions in the workplace"



¹⁶ <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/bristol-race-equality-strategic-leaders-group>

RECOMMENDATION :

Representation

Tower Hamlets Partnership to collate and jointly publish disaggregated data, including pay gap and the ethnic profile of their senior leadership, and monitor progress in addressing race inequality amongst senior leadership.

DIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS

The Commission was fortunate to hold two focus groups with school governors and teachers from the borough. It was clear from these focus groups that significant progress has been made over the years to improve educational attainment of particularly Bangladeshi children in Tower Hamlets but like London there is an attainment gap in particular for Black boys and White British Children particularly those on free school meals. It was also noted through a range of local schemes there has been progress in recruiting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teachers across the borough's schools and some progress on school governors. It was clear from the focus groups that more needed to be done to recruit more school governors from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and support them to progress including into chair positions. The Commission recommends that local school review their current governance members profile and set ambitious target to address this over the next few years. Schools need to also consider how they will support and empower new governors so they feel they can have an impact.

The focus group with schoolteachers highlighted the real issue of pervasive and insidious racism experienced by some teachers. All the teachers that joined the focus group did not reveal their identity despite some of them being in senior roles in their respective schools due to fear of repercussion on current job and future career aspirations. Across the board participants from the focus group highlighted their personal experiences of being overlooked for promotion in favour of less experienced and qualified white colleagues. They also presented data which showed a lack of diversity in senior roles within Tower Hamlets Schools. The Commission therefore recommends that schools need to look at how they can support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community teachers into senior leadership positions.

"Senior black scholars are few and far between"



RECOMMENDATION :

Diversity in Schools

Schools in Tower Hamlets deliver programmes to recruit more Black, Asian and Minority school governors and support them into senior positions. Schools also need to support more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teachers into leadership roles include Head and deputy head roles.

TESTING AND RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

Too many young people are unfamiliar with testing and the recruitment processes of employers. There is a significant class barrier when it comes to young people understanding the process and options available to them, and the intersectionality of class and ethnicity is apparent when looking at intentional or unintentional racial bias during the recruitment process. Well designed, carefully managed face-to-face assessments exhibit no discernible bias. Badly designed or managed face-to-face assessments can lead to blatant bias. Online methods of assessment, such as psychometric tests and application forms, are superficially fair but do in fact tend to indirectly disadvantage candidates from lower socioeconomic groups and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.

ELBA highlighted how many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people are unaware of the time needed to apply for further education and employment opportunities such as apprenticeships, graduate programmes and fast track programmes. Individuals with ethnic sounding names need to send between 60-90% more applications than White candidates to get one response¹⁷. ELBA are working with young people to raise awareness about how much work is required to gain employment and are trying to increase their 'job search' capacity.

Research has shown that anonymised recruitment has increased the chances of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic people being recruited. The Commission was pleased to hear that the council is introducing a new applicant tracking system which will help to eliminate unconscious bias from the recruitment process. Organisations across the borough need to scrutinise each stage of their recruitment process and ensure that the opportunity for unconscious bias is removed and is fair at every level.

"People are more likely to employ people like themselves"



¹⁷ Di Stasio and Heath, 2019. *Are employers in Britain discriminating against ethnic minorities?* Summary of findings from the GEMM project. http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Are-employers-in-Britain-discriminating-against-ethnic-minorities_final.pdf

RECOMMENDATION :

Testing and Assessment	Local employers and employment support agencies work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people to better prepare them for testing and assessments.
Recruitment Processes	Organisations to review their recruitment processes to ensure they are well designed and removes any opportunity for bias.

INTERNAL CULTURE

Many witnesses highlighted the importance of improving the internal culture of organisations to enable people to bring their ‘whole self’ to work and not feel pressured into code switching. Increased levels of representation, aspirational targets, better collection of data and improved progression pipelines all serve as key mechanisms for change, however there will still be a significant number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees at lower levels whose experience will only be improved if the organisational culture takes a seismic shift.

Individuals need to feel comfortable to speak up if they experience bias or discrimination. The need for a safe internal space where open and honest discussions can take place about race is vital. The Race at Work survey revealed that 38% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees felt their employer was comfortable talking about race and ethnicity and only 22% were receiving help to talk about it. This was certainly felt in the Commission’s focus group with employees. Some felt that conversations surrounding racial inequality are still very much private and secretive discussions. Organisations remain afraid or unwilling to have an open dialogue in public and expose their faults. Many employees attending the focus group agreed that the discussion is taking place at the middle and lower levels in organisations rather than at the top level where it is most needed. Others commented that people are unsure of the correct language and need to get comfortable using the word ‘Black’ and ‘White’.

This links in with wider observations witnesses made about interventions needed to transform and improve the internal culture such as reverse mentoring, better complaints handling, unconscious bias training, and discussions about White privilege, code switching, recruitment processes. The Commission was informed that one of the key points to come out of the council’s Black Lives Matter ‘open door session’ was the importance of reverse mentoring to help understand the experiences Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and the opportunities they have (or don’t have) within the organisation. The Commission noted that if the council, or any other organisation in the borough, is going to implement this in a meaningful way, it needs to be appropriately planned to appreciate the complexities of a junior officer providing guidance to a senior members of staff. Junior members of staff will need support to manage this relationship.

Similarly, open discussions around white privilege needs to be carefully managed but are a necessity to change behaviours. Many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people are tired of having to tell their story and feel the obligation is on them to raise awareness and deliver change. Their needs to be a reciprocal effort from senior white leaders. To develop allies and confront nuanced and structural racism, White people must understand that there are issues and topics they do not have to worry about, including racism. This must be a carefully constructed discussion which acknowledges that having white privilege is not racist, but you must be aware of how racism impacts other people and how we can ensure society is a fairer place. This discussion will be uncomfortable and must force people to consider how their actions maintain and support racist systems and structures (regardless of intent).

RECOMMENDATION :

Safe Space

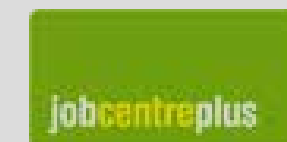
Organisations commit to creating a culture which creates a safe space for open and honest conversations about race within their organisation.


Black, Asian and

Minority Ethnic

INEQUALITIES
COMMISSION

In partnership with:



<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>24 May 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of Sharon Godman Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: Examining the Council's Commitments on Air Quality</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Sadie Dann - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
Wards affected	All Wards

REASONS FOR URGENCY

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 in order to provide the necessary clearances.

Executive Summary

This report submits the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Challenge Session which examined the Council's commitments to air quality and makes a number of recommendations for consideration.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the attached Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and agree the recommendations; and
2. Agree to submit the attached report to the Mayor and Cabinet for executive response.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This paper submits the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety for consideration by OSC

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the scrutiny challenge session provides a number of recommendations on the Council's commitments to

improving air quality for the Council to consider and take forward.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Air quality is an important public health issue – in London, 9,400 premature deaths are attributed to poor air quality and a cost of between £1.4 and £3.7 billion a year to the health service¹.
- 3.2 Air pollution contributes to shortening the life expectancy of Tower Hamlets residents, disproportionately impacting on the most vulnerable in our society, such as the poor, the old, the very young, and those with respiratory illnesses. Exposure to air pollution has also been linked to lung cancer, asthma, other respiratory conditions, Alzheimer's, stroke, cardiovascular diseases, and a number of other illnesses. Unsurprisingly, air pollution ranks as one of the top personal concerns of residents in the council's Annual Residents Survey².
- 3.3 Seventy-seven per cent of Tower Hamlets residents live in areas that breach EU and Government air pollution guidance³, as a result, the lung development of children in Tower Hamlets is affected, causing them to have up to five per cent less lung capacity than the national average⁴. This capacity never grows back once it is lost.
- 3.4 The Environment Act 1995 required a national air quality strategy to be produced and set national air quality standards and objectives for the first time. It also placed a statutory duty on local authorities to carry out a review and assessment of current levels of local air pollution, and to predict whether the national objectives would be met. Where non-compliance is likely, the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area and produce an Action Plan detailing how it proposes to work towards meeting the objectives.
- 3.5 Tower Hamlets council completed its first review and assessment in January 2000 and determined that national air quality objectives would not be met. As a result, the entire borough was declared an Air Quality Management Area in 2003, and the council was under statutory obligation to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. This is still the case today, with the last Air Quality Action Plan prepared in 2017⁵.
- 3.6 Along with preparing the Air Quality Action Plan, the council has developed policies and strategies aimed at improving air quality in the borough - these include the Anti-idling Policy, Transport Strategy, Liveable Streets

¹ <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/33224#:~:text=In%20London%20alone%2C%20air%20pollution,of%20pollutants%20into%20acid%20rain.>

² https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/2019_ARS_Briefing_Paper.pdf

³ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-atmospheric-emissions-inventory--laei--2016>

⁴ Research conducted through a major study (the EXHALE - Exploration of Health and Lungs in the Environment - project by King's College London) found that the lung capacity of 8 and 9-year-old children in Tower Hamlets is 5% lower than the national average

⁵ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Planning-and-building-control/Strategic-Planning/Local-Plan/Submission_2018/Air_Quality_Action_Plan_2017.pdf

Programme, Open Space Strategy, Parking Policy, and Net Zero Carbon Plan.

- 3.7 The reasons for the scrutiny challenge session included:
- To examine air pollution issues in the borough, and the Council's progress towards its air quality commitments including the Anti-idling Policy, Open Space Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Net Zero Carbon Plan (commitments relating to air quality), Transport Strategy, Parking Policy, and the Liveable Streets Programme)
 - To assess if there are any outstanding issues that haven't been addressed
 - To assess the impact on health implications for residents such as asthma and other health conditions linked to air pollution
 - To assess the Council's long-term plans for air quality improvement, including funding/budget proposals
- 3.6.1 The session, chaired by Councillor Faroque Ahmed, Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety, took place on 30 March 2021. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the challenge session was held virtually via Microsoft Teams in order to comply with the government's requirements for social distancing.
- 3.6.2 The session was structured that included: Chair's overview, including focus of the session and intended outcome, presentation from the service led by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm, and supported by the Divisional Director of Public Realm, Presentation from Public Health led by the Associate Director of Public Health, Committee discussion and lines of enquiry, Voluntary Sector user feedback, and input from Idling Action London Campaign, Scrutiny Committee discussion and recommendations, Chair's closing comments and next steps.
- 3.8 The Challenge Session resulted in the development of a number of recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The council to set up more air quality monitoring stations in key areas including around construction sites, such as by prioritising funding of air quality monitoring in future capital programmes so that it is proactive in collecting long-term accurate live air quality data from all parts of the borough not just certain sites; and to make monitoring data more accessible so residents are better informed to make decisions and promote behavioural change.

Recommendation 2

The council to develop a partnership plan with TfL to take a more proactive approach to manage and reduce TfL traffic on the TfL roads in the borough, as these to have been identified to be high drivers of road-based pollution in Tower Hamlets.

Recommendation 3

The council to develop evaluation methods of the Air Quality Action Plan to ensure the initiative's goals and objectives are being achieved, as well as identify any components of the initiative that are not effective.

Recommendation 4

The council to include air quality priorities into the remit of the Climate Emergency Partnership Board to ensure that it is included as an important part of partnership discussion.

Recommendation 5

The council to identify existing air quality measures in the current capital programme and prioritise them for delivery, such as EV charging points.

Recommendation 6

The council to develop plan to install green walls and green spaces in schools that currently have none, to purify the air our children breathe and protect them from the surrounding air pollution.

Recommendation 7

The council to develop plan to **convert** unused open spaces in the borough to green spaces to make these spaces greener and thus further reduce residents' exposure to air pollutants.

Recommendation 8

The council to promptly display anti-idling signs all over Tower Hamlets to discourage idling which will ultimately reduce emissions and also help drivers save fuel.

Recommendation 9

The council to investigate a new approach for stricter enforcement of anti-idling FPNs to better tackle idling and make this strategy more fit for purpose.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Air pollution contributes to shortening the life expectancy of Tower Hamlets residents, disproportionately impacting on the most vulnerable in our society, such as the poor, the old, the very young, and those with respiratory illnesses.
- 4.2 Seventy-seven per cent of Tower Hamlets residents live in areas that breach EU and Government air pollution legal limits , as a result, the lung development of children in Tower Hamlets is affected, causing them to have up to five per cent less lung capacity than the national average. This capacity never grows back once it is lost.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 6.2 Any financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations by the Council will need to be contained within agreed budgets

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 ('the 1995 Act') requires all local authorities in the UK to review and assess air quality in their area. Specifically, section 82 of the 1995 Act makes it a duty that every local authority shall review the air quality within its area, both at the present time and the likely future air quality. Section 83 of the 1995 Act also makes it a duty for local authorities to designate an air quality management area ('AQMA') where air quality objectives are not being achieved, or are not likely to be achieved within the relevant period, as set out in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 ('the 2000 Regulations'). Once an area has been designated then section 84 of the 1995 Act imposes a further duty on the local authority to carry out an assessment and then to develop an Action Plan for the air quality management area.
- 7.2 Paragraphs 3.5. and 3.6 of the report refer to the Council's Air Quality Action Plan, the policies and strategies aimed at improving the air quality in the borough. The recommendations in the report are aimed at achieving the aims of all of these.
- 7.3 The Council's adopted Open Space Strategy(2017-2027) identifies and sets out the various types of open spaces in the borough. This strategy in turn informs the Council's adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (adopted in March 20121), which sets out how developer contributions may be used to fund improvements to open spaces across the borough. Such improvements could encompass additional tree planting in such open spaces. Further, the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document also allows for new developments located within 200 metres of the identified Green Grid to make contributions towards the enhancement of the Green Grid. Urban Greening and biodiversity improvements to open spaces can also be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy and also by

developer contributions pursuant to the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document as appropriate in the circumstances.

- 7.4** The Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty).

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: Examining the Council's Air Quality Commitments and impacts on residents' health outcomes

Officer contact details for documents:

Sadie Dann - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate

Adam Boey, Senior Strategy and Policy Manager, Corporate

Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny

Challenge Session

Examining the Council's Air Quality Commitments and impacts on residents' health outcomes

16/04/2021

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Chair's Foreword

Air quality is vital to the health of Tower Hamlets' residents and the communities. Air pollution has been linked to short term health effects such as exacerbation of asthma, cough, wheezing and shortness of breath, as well as long term health effects such as lung cancer, respiratory conditions, stroke, and cardiovascular diseases. Ultimately these lead to increased respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and mortality, and reduced life expectancy of our residents.

The Coroner's ruling about pollution being a factor in the tragic death of young Ella Kissi-Debrah of Lewisham in December 2020 surely must not be forgotten.

Air pollution has long been an issue for the borough with poor air quality formally recognised in Tower Hamlets in 2003, when the whole borough was declared an Air Quality Management Area due to not meeting national objectives. The 2017 Air Quality Action Plan demonstrates the borough still has poor air quality.

My role, as Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety, is to shine a light onto issues, query and examine, and make recommendations that will add value to the council's work. I am pleased to present this report that summarises the findings of the challenge session examining the council's air quality commitments and impacts on residents' health outcomes. The report makes several recommendations for the council to consider undertaking.

I'd like to thank following people who contributed to this challenge session:

- Councillor Asma Islam, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm, and team of council officers who provided an overview of the council's commitments and approach to air quality in the borough and responded to scrutiny questions
- Natalie Curd from Idling Action London who provided a regional perspective on the performance of the borough
- James Wheale from Sustrans Tower Hamlets who provided an account of the voluntary sector perspective, particularly on clean routes to schools, the need for more engagement with residents via the voluntary sector's networks, and the need for more behaviour change programmes to encourage substantial, long-term changes to our air quality
- My scrutiny colleagues who supported the discussion and helped to form some of the recommendations being put forward

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety



Summary of Recommendations

Causes of air pollution and correlating health impacts

Recommendation 1	The council to set up more air quality monitoring stations in key areas including around construction sites, such as by prioritising funding of air quality monitoring in future capital programmes so that it is proactive in collecting long-term accurate live air quality data from all parts of the borough not just certain sites; and to make monitoring data more accessible so residents are better informed to make decisions and promote behavioural change.
Recommendation 2	The council to develop a partnership plan with TfL to take a more proactive approach to manage and reduce TfL traffic on the TfL roads in the borough, as these to have been identified to be high drivers of road-based pollution in Tower Hamlets.

Council's commitments to improving air quality and their effectiveness

Recommendation 3	The council to develop evaluation methods of the Air Quality Action Plan to ensure the initiative's goals and objectives are being achieved, as well as identify any components of the initiative that are not effective.
Recommendation 4	The council to include air quality priorities into the remit of the Climate Emergency Partnership Board to ensure that it is included as an important part of partnership discussion.
Recommendation 5	The council to identify existing air quality measures in the current capital programme and prioritise them for delivery, such as EV charging points.

Targeted responses: open spaces/green spaces

Recommendation 6	The council to develop plan to install green walls and green spaces in schools that currently have none, to purify the air our children breathe and protect them from the surrounding air pollution.
Recommendation 7	The council to develop plan to covert unused open spaces in the borough to green spaces to make these spaces greener and thus further reduce residents' exposure to air pollutants.

Targeted responses: road-based emissions

Recommendation 8	The council to promptly display anti-idling signs all over Tower Hamlets to discourage idling which will ultimately reduce emissions and also help drivers save fuel.
Recommendation 9	The council to investigate a new approach for stricter enforcement of anti-idling FPNs to better tackle idling and make this strategy more fit for purpose.

Introduction

- 1.1 Air quality is an important public health issue – in London, 9,400 premature deaths are attributed to poor air quality and a cost of between £1.4 and £3.7 billion a year to the health service¹.
- 1.2 Air pollution contributes to shortening the life expectancy of Tower Hamlets residents, disproportionately impacting on the most vulnerable in our society, such as the poor, the old, the very young, and those with respiratory illnesses. Exposure to air pollution has also been linked to lung cancer, asthma, other respiratory conditions, Alzheimer's, stroke, cardiovascular diseases, and a number of other illnesses. Unsurprisingly, air pollution ranks as one of the top personal concerns of residents in the council's Annual Residents Survey².
- 1.3 Seventy-seven per cent of Tower Hamlets residents live in areas that breach EU and Government air pollution guidance³, as a result, the lung development of children in Tower Hamlets is affected, causing them to have up to five per cent less lung capacity than the national average⁴. This capacity never grows back once it is lost.
- 1.4 The Environment Act 1995 required a national air quality strategy to be produced, and set national air quality standards and objectives for the first time. It also placed a statutory duty on local authorities to carry out a review and assessment of current levels of local air pollution, and to predict whether the national objectives would be met. Where non-compliance is likely, the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area, and produce an Action Plan detailing how it proposes to work towards meeting the objectives.
- 1.5 Tower Hamlets council completed its first review and assessment in January 2000 and determined that national air quality objectives would not be met. As a result, the entire borough was declared an Air Quality Management Area in 2003, and the council was under statutory obligation to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. This is still the case today, with the last Air Quality Action Plan prepared in 2017⁵.
- 1.6 Along with preparing the Air Quality Action Plan, the council has developed policies and strategies aimed at improving air quality in the borough - these include the Anti-idling Policy, Transport Strategy, Liveable Streets Programme, Open Space Strategy, Parking Policy, and Net Zero Carbon Plan.

¹<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/33224#:~:text=In%20London%20alone%2C%20air%20pollution,of%20pollutants%20into%20acid%20rain.>

² https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/2019_AR_S_Briefing_Paper.pdf

³ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-atmospheric-emissions-inventory--laei--2016>

⁴ Research conducted through a major study (the EXHALE - Exploration of Health and Lungs in the Environment - project by King's College London) found that the lung capacity of 8 and 9-year-old children in Tower Hamlets is 5% lower than the national average

⁵ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Planning-and-building-control/Strategic-Planning/Local-Plan/Submission_2018/Air_Quality_Action_Plan_2017.pdf

Methodology

- 2.1 The reasons for the scrutiny challenge session included:
- To examine air pollution issues in the borough, and the Council's progress towards its air quality commitments including the Anti-idling Policy, Open Space Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Net Zero Carbon Plan (commitments relating to air quality), Transport Strategy, Parking Policy, and the Liveable Streets Programme)
 - To assess if there are any outstanding issues that haven't been addressed
 - To assess the impact on health implications for residents such as asthma and other health conditions linked to air pollution
 - To assess the Council's long-term plans for air quality improvement, including funding/budget proposals
- 2.2 A more detailed scope for the challenge session can be found at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the challenge session was held virtually via Microsoft Teams in order to comply with the government's requirements for social distancing.
- 2.4 The session, chaired by Councillor Faroque Ahmed, Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety, took place on Tuesday 30 March 2021 from 6pm to 8pm. The session followed a structure that included:
- Chair's overview, including focus of the session and intended outcome
 - Presentation from the service led by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm, and supported by the Divisional Director of Public Realm
 - Presentation from Public Health led by the Associate Director of Public Health
 - Committee discussion and lines of enquiry
 - Voluntary Sector user feedback, and input from Idling Action London Campaign
 - Scrutiny Committee discussion and recommendations
 - Chair's closing comments and next steps
- 2.5 Members in attendance:
- Councillor Faroque Ahmed - Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety (Session Chair)
 - Councillor James King - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair
 - Councillor Bex White - Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Children and Education Sub-Committee
 - Councillor Gabriela Salva-Macallan - Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee
 - Councillor Leema Qureshi - Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources
 - Councillor Ehtasham Haque - Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee
 - Councillor Andrew Wood - OSC Member
 - Councillor Denise Jones - OSC Member
 - Halima Islam - OSC Member (co-optee)
 - James Wilson - OSC Member (co-optee)
 - Councillor Shad Chowdhury - non-executive councillor
 - Councillor Victoria Obaze - non-executive councillor
 - Councillor Val Whitehead - non-executive councillor

Evidence received from officers, experts, and users:

- Councillor Asma Islam - Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm
- Dan Jones - Divisional Director Public Realm, LBTH
- Katy Scammell - Associate Director Public Health, LBTH
- Natalie Curd - Idling Action London Project Lead
- James Wheale - Sustrans Tower Hamlets Project Officer (Voluntary Sector)
- David Tolley - Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, LBTH
- Muhammad Islam - Pollution Team Leader, LBTH
- Jack Ettinger - Strategic Transport Team, LBTH

The challenge session was supported by LBTH officers:

- Onyekachi Ajisafe - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
- Adam Boey - Senior Strategy and Policy Manager, Corporate

Findings and Recommendations

Causes of air pollution and correlating health impacts

- 3.1. The primary pollutants of concern for Tower Hamlets are particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Scrutiny members in the challenge session heard that Tower Hamlets continues to show high levels of NO₂ (Blackwell exceeded National Air Quality Objective standards and WHO guideline values) and particulate matter (PM_{2.5} exceeded WHO guideline values at all sites).
- 3.2. Pollution mapping across the borough showed consistently high levels of these pollutants along arterial roads (A11, A12, A13, and the Highway and Cambridge Heath Road/Mare Street)
- 3.3. Scrutiny members heard that the main causes of elevated air pollution is road transport.
- 3.4. However, our detailed information on pollution levels across the borough is limited and patchy. Upon reviewing the air monitoring stations set up in the borough, Members raised queries as to the insufficient amount of air monitoring stations in the borough - there is a big gap in the west of the borough where we seem to have the worst air quality, yet there are no live monitoring stations set up there.
- 3.5. The service confirmed that there were only a few monitoring stations in the borough and they have plans to only set up one more next year on the Highway. Council officers agreed that more monitoring stations are needed to get a more accurate picture of air pollution levels in the borough.
- 3.6. Scrutiny members were told that air pollution has been on a downward trend with the exception of PM_{2.5}. However, Scrutiny members raised issues with the air quality data presented by the council being outdated. Without accurate up-to date data, we cannot understand the full picture – where there are impacts, and their severity. This limits our informed and targeted response, with decisions not made on full information.
- 3.7. Having looked at the website and downloaded the air quality data, Scrutiny members highlighted that the council needs to share data collected from its air quality monitoring stations in even more accessible ways than that on its website, so there is more clarity as to what the latest information means to the public, and increase awareness and understanding about the situation in Tower Hamlets. Council officers conceded that other information could be used besides the GLA data that are updated every five years, and further thought needs to be put into how they are sharing and presenting the data, which they plan to look into.

Recommendation 1

The council to set up more air quality monitoring stations in key areas including around construction sites, such as by prioritising funding of air quality monitoring in future capital programmes so that it is proactive in collecting long-term accurate live air quality data from all parts of the borough not just certain sites; and to make monitoring data more accessible so residents are better informed to make decisions and promote behavioural change.

- 3.8. Council officers highlighted that that the poor air quality from NO₂ results from road traffic and roads over which the Council has no direct control. Lobbying with TfL continues - to work with

them to switch people away from driving and onto other transport methods such as train, walking and cycling. The Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expanding to Tower Hamlets on 31 October 2021 is forecast to help reduce this.

- 3.9. Scrutiny members enquired as to what standing communications the council has with TfL to engage with them on mitigating/monitoring the road-based pollution, as TfL roads such as for example the A13 seem to be main drivers of road-based pollution. Council officers commented that further information on this will be followed up on after the meeting.
- 3.10. Scrutiny members raised questions regarding what to expect as a result of the ULEZ extending to Tower Hamlets, as well as what would happen to residents with old cars not compliant with ULEZ. Council officers commented that there is a forecast reduction of a third of pollution based on TfL's modelling of the impact of ULEZ, they further added that if residents with vehicles that don't meet ULEZ requirements drive into the ULEZ zones they will have to pay a daily charge as is presently the case with the Central London ULEZ.

Recommendation 2

The council to develop a partnership plan with TfL to take a more proactive approach to manage and reduce TfL traffic on the TfL roads in the borough, as these to have been identified to be high drivers of road-based pollution in Tower Hamlets.

- 3.11. Scrutiny members heard from Public health about health implications of air pollution:
- short-term effects – exacerbation of asthma, coughing, wheezing and breathing difficulties; and
 - long-term effects – stroke; lung cancer; respiratory conditions, cardiovascular disease.
- 3.12. Members were also told that no-one is safe but there are certain groups more at risk such as pregnant women (and their unborn children), children, adults with existing conditions, the elderly.
- 3.13. Public Health also revealed that health outcomes haven't changed (improved or declined) over the last five years, but such results are difficult to interpret regarding effectiveness of improvement efforts. We do not have enough detailed data to understand the complications. However, the Air Quality Action Plan needs to continue and we need to be ambitious about our efforts in order to improve. There are gaps: we should use community champions to enhance community mobilisation on air quality issues; we need to encourage and promote behaviour change.

Council's commitments to improving air quality and their effectiveness

- 3.14. Scrutiny members heard that the council has its Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) that it has to produce as a statutory requirement, it's a five-year plan which they report progress on an annual basis to the GLA. The council is due to review the AQAP in 2022, so work is currently underway to assess how successful it's been with actions and determine what actions may need to be included in the next iteration of the AQAP. There is a working group set up within the council that comprises of officers across the council's services including Public Health, to meet the actions of the AQAP.
- 3.15. Scrutiny members felt that in terms of monitoring the AQAP projects, evaluation methods need to be put in place to ensure the objectives of the Plan are being successfully achieved.
- 3.16. Members also raised that the Council is in the final year of its current AQAP, and of the 76 actions within the Plan, there are 22 without updates. And of the actions in the Plan that do have updates there are some with concerning issues regarding progress on the actions.

Recommendation 3

The council to develop evaluation methods of the Air Quality Action Plan to ensure the initiative's goals and objectives are being achieved, as well as identify any components of the initiative that are not effective.

- 3.17. The Scrutiny Members were concerned that the Air Quality Board was subsumed into the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). When Members queried the Public Health Team (who sit on the HWB) as to how often Air Quality is brought up in the HWB's agenda, it was identified that in the two years the Associate Director of Public Health had been in the council air quality had not yet been discussed in the HWB. In the first year, it hadn't been put on the agenda as the board has a massive agenda and only meets quarterly, and in the second year the focus had been on COVID-19.
- 3.18. Scrutiny members followed up with enquiring if there were any future plans to provide a separate partnership board where people will practice strategies to improve air quality, and they can come together with the council. Scrutiny members understands that officers within the council meet on air quality, which is good, but the intention is about extending that partnership opportunity. Council officers commented that they are looking into setting up a Climate Emergency Partnership Board and it may be that air quality can be discussed as a section of this Board, which is something they are willing to look into seeing as CO₂ emissions which is within the climate emergency remit, does have an impact on air quality as well.
- 3.19. Members queried that air quality certainly needs a board that it can be brought to for partnership work. Scrutiny members were of the opinion that it was a mistake for the Air Quality Board to have been subsumed into the HWB, especially as evidence heard in the meeting indicates that a lot of the air quality actions live within the Place Directorate.
- 3.20. Scrutiny members heard from the Idling Action London Campaign that one of the things that most councils will have to reflect on is the case of the Ella Kissi-Debrah inquest, and the findings that are coming out of that. One of these findings is on local authorities' partnership working together with other local authorities, the polluters, and other organisations. So, the Idling Action Project really encourages that partnership working.

- 3.21. Scrutiny members also heard from Sustrans that the council further working with voluntary organisations like themselves would be encouraged, especially in relation to behaviour change. Since they have a local understanding of the different cultural and social values, and therefore the barriers to change. Partnership working with organisations such as themselves during the design and engagement stages of air quality programmes, such as for example the Liveable Streets Programme would utilise their expertise and networks with schools and communities and would ensure that councils provide meaningful engagement in the planning and consultation stages of such big developments. As this is really when behaviour change programmes start to work, when collaborative design helps the planning, as well as the implementation and accessibility of the infrastructure to ensure we achieve the changes we need to make.

Recommendation 4

The council to include air quality priorities into the remit of the Climate Emergency Partnership Board to ensure that it is included as an important part of partnership discussion.

- 3.22. Scrutiny members heard that as part of the council's ambition to move towards the World Health Organisation recommended level for PM_{2.5}, which is 10 micrograms particles per cubic metre by 2030, more work needs to be done to reduce the amount of pollution that's caused from road traffic. The borough's current PM_{2.5} level is currently higher than the UK average, so they hope to move people away from the usage of cars with combustion engines towards electronic vehicles (EV) as it would be interesting to monitor the effect that will have on the borough's PM levels.
- 3.23. Scrutiny members were concerned that funding has been available for electronic vehicle (EV) charging points, but there has still been a lag in delivery which is difficult to explain to residents. The Cabinet Member commented that the Council plans to install 300 EV charging points by 2022, however, of this target, they currently have installed about 159 EV charging points.

Recommendation 5

The council to identify existing air quality measures in the current capital programme and prioritise them for delivery, such as EV charging points.

- 3.24. Scrutiny members questioned what the Mayor of London's £200,000 Air Quality Fund had been spent on. Committee Members were also concerned about long-term data measuring of air quality, especially around schools. They highlighted that £5 million funding has been announced to local authorities to deliver projects to improve air quality and queried if this funding can be used to update and increase the capturing of this air quality long-term data.
- 3.25. The council officers commentated that in terms of monitoring of the Liveable Streets Programme and other similar schemes, the council are doing traffic counts that will help indicate whether traffic has moved. However, council officers conceded that the council needs to do more monitoring of air quality, they plan to put install one more monitoring station, as they are quite costly. The cost is approximately £50,000 per monitoring station, so funding permitted they are currently only committing to putting up just one monitoring station, with the hopes to put up more in the future.

Targeted responses: open spaces/green spaces

- 3.26. The Cabinet member acknowledged that parks, open spaces and trees help address the air pollution issues in the borough. Council officers added that the council monitors and reviews the loss and gain of open space areas annually which is published in the Local Plan's annual monitoring report. However, Scrutiny members were concerned that there were schools in the borough that had no open spaces within their premises at all.
- 3.27. Scrutiny members noted that green screens are in essence living screens which when installed in schools puts a barrier between the pollution and the school, as the leaves capture the pollutants. Scrutiny members enquired as to what efforts the Council has made to increase the number of green walls installed in schools to further protect children from the surrounding air pollution, and purify the air they breathe in. Council officers commented that there are green screens installed in 4 primary schools in Tower Hamlets.
- 3.28. Scrutiny members queried that there were a lot of schools along the TfL roads with high pollution, and enquired as to the location of the 4 primary schools where these green screens have been installed, how effective they are, and if there are plans to roll these out further if they are effective. Council officers commented that research undergone by King's College on a school in Enfield found that from the roadside to the school playground, there was approximately 18 micrograms reduction in NO₂, which is a significant reduction, so the green screens can be quite effective when used correctly.
- 3.29. Members further queried why more green screens had not been installed around more schools in the borough, especially those with no playgrounds.
- 3.30. Scrutiny members were also concerned about the increased use of wood burners in private homes and canal boats which create air quality issues, and highlighted that the council has no policy yet on this emerging issue. Council officers commented that residents should not be using unauthorised fuels and burners based on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) legislation, and these are banned in the mock control zones. They added that the council doesn't get many complaints from residents regarding domestic wood burners. However, the Council does get more complaints about canal boats, and are trying to engage with boat owners via an awareness raising campaign which started in February, to educate boat owners on what they should be doing to reduce the burning. The Cabinet Member added that this has been raised to the Mayor's attention as well , and a meeting has been scheduled with Canal and River Trust to promote partnership working with them, with the aim to adjust their terms and conditions to ensure change, and discuss how the council can support those using wood burners to make that switch

Recommendation 6

The council to develop plan to install green walls and green spaces in schools that currently have none, to purify the air our children breathe and protect them from the surrounding air pollution. [NB. Action 54 in AQAP 2017]

- 3.31. The Chair commented that there are also a number of unused open spaces in the borough, which should be dealt with and made better use of by converting them into green spaces as soon as possible, as these will further help reduce residents health impacts from air pollution.

- 3.32. Scrutiny members also raised that there is an ongoing erosion of open spaces, and it is unclear what provision is being made regarding this, and whether as part of the Open Space Strategy there will be some form of re-provision of these in some of the ongoing construction in the borough, and how this is being monitored. Scrutiny members believe that replacements of these eroding open spaces need to be delivered, and they need to meet the kind of biodiversity level that's needed as a replacement.

Recommendation 7

The council to develop plan to convert unused open spaces in the borough to green spaces to make these spaces greener and thus further reduce residents' exposure to air pollutants.

Targeted responses: road-based emissions

- 3.33. Scrutiny Members raised the issue that more behavioural change work also needs to be done to change residents' mindsets and behaviours towards using vehicles and idling. The Cabinet Member conceded that there has been a lot of requests from residents regarding further action against idling, and for example in the Whitechapel area they have put up anti-idling signs around the East London Mosque and around 2 schools. She acknowledged that more signs need to be put up in idling spots around the borough and they are taking it seriously and working towards it as part of behaviour change.
- 3.34. Further in relation to idling, a co-optee member enquired if the work the council is doing is being fed through to companies like Uber, because in residential areas such as hers, Uber drivers consistently park outside residents' properties, while keeping their engines running, and many residents are placed in an uncomfortable position and mostly don't have the confidence to step out of their houses to tell the Uber drivers to switch off their engines, and this is happening quite a lot in certain areas of the borough. Council officers commented that they have approached corporate organisations to take control over what their drivers are doing.
- 3.35. Scrutiny members heard that anti-idling signs had been erected in some hotspots such as primary schools, however, the council is continuously trying to identify more hotspots, as they are aware that can further help reduce idling in the borough.
- 3.36. Scrutiny members felt that the increasing size of vehicles in the borough and their accompanying larger engines is demoralising in the fight against air pollution. Scrutiny Members believe that ideas on tackling this need to be considered by the council. Council officers commented that they have recognised the increase in size of vehicles and their pollution in terms of the changes they have made in their pricing charging in the Parking Policy. So that it levies a higher charge on those higher polluting vehicles and larger vehicles. They added that the council will continue to monitor whether this strategy has an impact or not on the size of vehicles we have in the borough, as it has done with some of the permits in the borough.
- 3.37. Scrutiny members were concerned about last mile deliveries and the recent increased use of delivery services and takeaway, they highlighted that this trend is likely to continue post-COVID-19. The Members questioned as to what plans the council have for last mile deliveries to de-incentivise the use of motor vehicles for these deliveries where it's not necessary. Council officers stated that there seems to be a certain amount of change that's happening

organically, there are more bicycle delivery companies operating in London, and it is anticipated that this will continue to grow based on what the council is doing. The council has a project called Blend Business Low Emission Network, which is part funded by the GLA. And as part of that programme, the council is looking to set up an e-cargo bike delivery service from crisp street market, which involves residents purchasing goods from crisp street market and then leaving their items with this delivery service for delivery to their homes. The Cabinet Lead also added that based on learning from the Climate Emergency partnership workshop on 17 March 2021, the council wants to look into encouraging resident behaviour change post-COVID-19 to educate residents in the same household to jointly purchase items together rather than separately, as this is more eco-friendly, and to also support businesses to deliver these goods to residents in an electric vehicle or any other means that is more environmentally friendly.

- 3.38. Scrutiny members had issues with the council's previous car scrappage schemes, as it only offers scrappage of old cars in exchange for new cars which will still cause pollution. The Scrutiny Members felt that a new innovative scheme similar to the new Coventry Council Scheme where residents are given mobility credits for scrapping their cars, needs to be developed by the council. As this scheme offers scrappage in exchange for money towards public transport, hire bikes, and similar less-polluting options.

Recommendation 8

The council to promptly display anti-idling signs all over Tower Hamlets to discourage idling which will ultimately reduce emissions and also help drivers save fuel.

- 3.39. Scrutiny members noted that the council had claimed powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for idling. However, when Scrutiny members raised questions over the future plans of the anti-idling programme, how effective this current system of enforcement has been on vehicle idling, and how many FPNs had been issued so far, council officers identified that no FPNs had been issued because the process involves enforcement officers in the first instance issuing a warning to drivers to turn the vehicle off when caught idling. Officers added that the council's focus is on educating drivers on the negative impact of idling and there is still a need for strong education to achieve behaviour change. The Cabinet Member also commented that the issue of continuous vehicle idling has also been brought to her attention by a number of residents and councillors, and that the team has put forward some ideas to further tackle idling and are more than happy to take some more ideas on board.
- 3.40. Scrutiny members acknowledged that during lockdown the anti-idling efforts had to be put on hold because of difficulties we all had to face. However, when things go back to normal there needs to be a more effective plan in place, because it is a serious issue in the borough, drivers are grossly idling every day. Scrutiny members felt that special measure needs to be taken to tackle this issue that isn't reducing, they reiterated that changes to the penalty system needs to be considered to make efforts more effective.
- 3.41. The Idling Action London project lead agreed that the current system of enforcement is a very ineffective tool, as it is very hard to enforce effectively because the legislation around enforcement is quite unworkable. The legislation is very old and vague, which means there is no clear guidelines for local authorities to follow. In terms of the possibility of enforcement fines being revised or improved, the City of London Corporation have submitted a bill to the House of Lords, which is due for its second reading, and as part of that bill increasing the fine for

fixed penalty notices, up to 80 pounds is included. So, if that bill goes through, it means that local authorities will then have that at their disposal.

Recommendation 9

The council to investigate a new approach for stricter enforcement of anti-idling FPNs to better tackle idling and make this strategy more fit for purpose.

Appendix 1. Challenge Session Scope


Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session Scope:

Examining the Council’s Air Quality commitments and impact on residents’ health outcomes

Title	Examining the Council’s Air Quality commitments and impact on residents’ health outcomes
Reason for enquiry	<p>Air Pollution is one of the top concerns raised by residents in the Annual Residents Survey. Some key facts about air pollution highlighted by the council state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77 per cent of residents in Tower Hamlets live in areas that breach EU and government air pollution guidance. • Our children’s lungs are up to 5 per cent smaller because of air pollution. • We are London’s third highest emitter of CO2. • 77 per cent of our residents are exposed to unsafe pollution levels. • Air pollution is linked to asthma, heart disease, dementia, lung cancer and low birth weight. <p>The reasons for this scrutiny challenge session are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine air pollution issues in the borough, and the Council’s progress towards it’s air quality commitments including the Anti-idling Policy, Open Space Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Net Zero Carbon Plan (commitments relating to air quality), Transport Strategy, Parking Policy, and the Liveable Streets Programme). • To assess if there are any outstanding issues that haven’t been addressed. • To assess the impact on health implications for residents such as asthma and other health conditions linked to air pollution. • To assess the Council’s long-term plans for air quality improvement, including funding/budget proposals.
Core Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main causes of air pollution in the borough, and what are the correlating health implications for residents? 2. Are there any specific resident groups that are especially impacted by air pollution in the borough? 3. What commitments have the Council made towards improving air quality in the borough (such as in relation to the Anti-idling Policy, Open Space Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Net Zero Carbon Plan (commitments relating to air quality), Transport Strategy, Parking Policy, and the Liveable Streets Programme)? And what progress has been made towards these? 4. To what extent do these air quality plans and commitments address the air quality issues in the borough? 5. Are there any issues/ gaps that haven’t fully been addressed? 6. What efforts/plans has the Council made towards increasing the number of Green Walls and Roofs in the borough, especially in schools?

	<p>7. How effective has the Council's air quality plans been on improving health outcomes of residents, especially children and young people?</p> <p>8. What are the Council's air quality plans for the future and what are the funding/budget implications for this?</p>
Proposed completion date	30th March 2021 from 6pm-8pm
Desired outcome	Establish the extent to which air quality issues have been addressed by the Council, and identify any issues/gaps not fully met.
What will not be included	There will be no focus on other areas relating to climate change besides air quality, specific to Tower Hamlets.
Risks (mitigation)	The session is dominated by untested opinions. It needs to be informed by robust evidence
Equality & Diversity considerations	Specific to demographics of Tower Hamlets. Air quality plans need to take into consideration the impacts on the different protected characteristics.
Key stakeholders/ consultees	Cllr Faroque Ahmed (Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety), Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members, Ward Councillors.
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr Asma Islam (Cabinet Lead for Environment and Public Realm)
Potential witnesses	Dan Jones (DD for Public Realm), Keiko Okawa, Katy Scammell (Public Health Consultant), Natalie Curd (Idling Action London), Tower Hamlets Project Officer (Sustrans)
Research/Evidence required	Desktop research, Internal (Council), and Annual Residents Survey
Timescales	<p>Agree Scope pre-meeting & planning session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session 1: Scoping meeting with Scrutiny Lead for Environment 26 February 2021 • Session 2: Scoping meeting with Council officer 4 March 2021 • Session 3: Scoping meeting with Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Council officers 8 March 2021 • Session 4: Challenge Session (virtual) 30 March 2021 6pm-8pm • Report first draft – April 2021 (scrutiny lead and officers for comments) • Scrutiny report for OSC sign off 26 April 2021 • Council response (action plan) for scrutiny recommendations June 2020 / July 2021 • Council response (action plan report) for CLT, MAB and Cabinet August 2021.
Publicity	Council Channels and email to members, once report has been completed and signed off by OSC, methods to publicise will be explored.
Links to Strategic/ Mayoral Priorities	<p>Priority 2: A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in</p> <p>Outcome 1: People live in a borough that is clean and green.</p>

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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>24 May 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of Sharon Godman Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Filuck Miah - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
Wards affected	All Wards

REASONS FOR URGENCY

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 in order to provide the necessary clearances.

Executive Summary

This report summarises the Committee's work in reviewing the scrutiny function in Tower Hamlets and submits an Improvement Plan to implement a range of actions in 2021-22 to improve and enhance scrutiny.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the activity undertaken by the 2020-21 Overview and Scrutiny Committee to understand the strengths and weaknesses of scrutiny at Tower Hamlets: and
2. Agree to implement the draft Improvement Plan for 2021-22.
3. Agree for the Overview & Scrutiny Chair to make further amendments to the Improvement Plan

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This paper submits the Improvement Plan for 2021-22 and actions therein to improve and enhance the scrutiny function at Tower Hamlets.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Take no action - this is not recommended as there is a case for change as shown by the evidence collected in the Improvement Plan.

4. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 From March to April 2021, scrutiny officers ran a survey for scrutiny members, executive members, and non-executive members as part of a health check on scrutiny to help evaluate the effectiveness and impact of overview and scrutiny for 2020-21, as well help to inform areas for improvement for the next municipal year. The survey was also sent to officers involved in scrutiny throughout the year, for their feedback.
- 3.2 OSC also held two away-days in April 2021 to reflect on the achievements of scrutiny over the municipal year, and to formulate improvements that could build upon scrutiny's success.
- 3.3 Both the survey and the away days formed the basis for the development of an Improvement Plan for 2021-22 (Attachment 1). The Improvement Plan suggests actions to implement in seven areas of the scrutiny function at Tower Hamlets:
- A. Aims & Objectives: All Members, officers, and residents in Tower Hamlets to understand the role of scrutiny and what it aims to achieve
 - B. Meeting Administration: All scrutiny meetings to be run in a professional and highly efficient way to enable effective scrutiny to take place
 - C. Work Programme: Develop and deliver a coordinated work programme across all scrutiny committees which supports the council to achieve its strategic objectives and reflects the concerns of residents
 - D. Represent residents and enable their concerns to inform Council decision making and policy development
 - E. Evidence gathering: Ensure a wide range of witnesses are engaged, and evidence researched, to allow Scrutiny to make informed and effective recommendations
 - F. Scrutiny improves outcomes and drives improvement in public services
 - G. Accountability & Culture: Nurture a culture of scrutiny and work closely with the Council's Cabinet Leads and Corporate Directors to encourage their buy-in and have open and honest conversations about performance, key issues and identify where scrutiny can add value

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Actions in the Improvement Plan 2021-22 seek to improve the operation and planning of scrutiny in Tower Hamlets, along with making scrutiny more accessible to residents and partners of the borough by raising awareness and seeking greater engagement and participation by the wider community.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 The actions in the attached Improvement Plan are made as part of the Committee's role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the council, as required under its Best Value duty.

5.3 The Committee has a mandatory consultation role on all items that are the responsibility of full Council as set out in the budget and policy framework.

5.4 Although likely to form part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme, there are no direct environmental, risk management, crime reduction or safeguarding issues arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 This report suggests a number of actions in the draft Improvement Plan for 2021-22 to strengthen scrutiny arrangements in Tower Hamlets.

6.2 There are no direct financial implications to the Council from this report, however if the cost of actions carried out to implement improvements cannot be contained within the existing Council revenue budget, then growth funding will need to be requested for consideration as part of the medium term financial planning process.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The Council is required by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 9 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area

or its inhabitants and may make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions.

- 7.2 The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This is referred to as the Council's best value duty.
- 7.3 The recommendations to help strengthen scrutiny arrangements are consistent with both the Council's best value duty and its duties under Local Government Act 2000.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- Draft Improvement Plan 2021-22

Officer contact details for documents:

Filuck Miah - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate

Daniel Kerr - Strategy and Policy Manager, Corporate

Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22

RAG status	Missed target requires action	On target but with minor issues	Completed action
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A. Aims & Objectives: All Members, officers, and residents in Tower Hamlets to understand the role of scrutiny and what it aims to achieve

Objectives	Priority	Action	Owner(s)	Delivery	RAG	Comments
1. O&S has a clearly defined and valued role in the Council's improvement and governance arrangements and includes prioritising to ensure that the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority	Establish engagement dialogue between scrutiny leads with Cabinet portfolio holders and senior council officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each scrutiny lead to diarise quarterly meetings with relevant officers and Cabinet members 	Strategy & Policy officers	May/June 21		Needs to be ongoing on a regular basis each municipal year
	Create comms plan for Overview and Scrutiny's toolkit and public user guide and publicity of O&S meetings via to various comms channel	<p>What does this look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video at away day for comms channels Publicise committee meetings via Council comms and partner channels Create channel mechanism to update and feedback to residents on activity, outcomes etc. Publicise one-off scrutiny review and challenge sessions Publicise scrutiny reports via social media channels – both comms and Members Build a high level one-page summary 	Strategy & Policy officers, Comms officers	Summer 21		Invite external comms lead to discuss best approach

Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22

		<p>template for committee meeting activities i.e. topic discussed, KLE's actions/recs to inform residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members also to create interest via their social media feeds such as videos • Comms support to help resident engagement better with scrutiny – (options) 				
	Create separate plan for the publication of the Committees Work		Strategy and Policy officers in discussion with the Scrutiny Leads			
	Scrutiny to get involved earlier in policy development and pre-decision scrutiny	Use the 1-2-1 with Cabinet Member and officers to raise this as an item of discussion	Scrutiny Leads	May/June 2021		
2. O&S Members have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their roles effectively	<p>Establish an annual training package for Scrutiny Members to aid them with developing key skills required to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Include internal training options where possible such as briefing sessions for finance and audit, risk management, performance,</p> <p>Developing better understanding of financial and policy context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put likely briefing dates in diary • Need to undertake a skills audit of Scrutiny members to understand training needs and develop programme • Create training need matrix • Working with CfPS to ensure Members 	Strategy & Policy officers working closely with CD's DDs, HoS for service areas	Summer 21		<p>Target next municipal year for comprehensive training programme</p> <p>Available access Audit's training programme for Members</p> <p>Delivered briefing session induction, business rate reset</p>

Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22

	<p>Members understanding the range of service areas within the portfolio</p> <p>Developing learning n key areas which will help strengthen scrutiny's role and impact</p>	<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members induction with specific portfolio areas • Members undertaking site visits where applicable to develop their knowledge base • Source training to help understand Council finances i.e. Pensions Fund, Treasury, Management, Acquisitions & Disposals, Budget Setting, Councils Reserves & Outturn Monitoring, and Risk Management 				<p>and strategic plan</p>
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B. Meeting Administration: All scrutiny meetings to be run in a professional and highly efficient way to enable effective scrutiny to take place

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<p>3. O&S meetings and activities are well-planned, chaired effectively and make best use of the resources available to it</p>	<p>Scrutiny chairs delegating to committee members to take on a more active role for the next scrutiny meeting topic leading to better engagement and ownership from members and more robust research and evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny members to meet informally once a month to discuss priorities for committee agendas and report development 	<p>O&S Chair and Scrutiny Leads</p>	<p>Monthly from Summer 21</p>		<p>To review approach at scrutiny away day – reflection/ improvements Timing needs to be found</p>
	<p>All papers to be shared with Members (a week in advance of the committee meeting) to allow Members sufficient time to review the papers and establish key lines of enquiry for the item.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and themes to be requested at beginning of calendar month before committee Have the information well before the meeting so that they are well prepared what needs to be asked and what needs to be done. Committees could use more case studies and open to more community members and group involvement. Scrutinise decisions based on clear set of factors e.g., finances, risk, impact, Scoping out agenda items for committee meetings to help better use of time / questioning with more focus and purpose. Members raising residents concern at 	<p>Divisional Directors and or Heads of Service, Strategy & Policy officers</p>	<p>Jan 2021</p>		<p>Further review as part of the planning process for next municipal year</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee meetings Balance between officers/ Members given sufficient time to present on massive issues 				
	Improve focus of pre-meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a pre- agenda template for discussion at pre-meets to help focus and perform better at meetings 	Scrutiny leads			
	Improve scope to include case studies, external organisations, hearing from residents and or local groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a stakeholder mapping within scope of the agenda items to ensure that the relevant people are attending the meeting. 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with Strategy & Policy officers	May 2021 onwards		

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C. Work Programme: Develop and deliver a coordinated work programme across all scrutiny committees which supports the council to achieve its strategic objectives and reflects the concerns of residents

4.	O&S Committee and it's sub-committees develop a work programme, focusing on priority areas including:	Scrutiny support to assist scrutiny members with research and analysis on progress made over the last year including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each committee and sub-committee meeting to have one area of spotlight or 	Strategy & Policy officers	May 2021		To be programmed in for next municipal year (2021-22) as part of O&S work
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement agenda Delivering the strategic plan Linking performance and budget scrutiny 	<p>timetabling in service action plans to come back to scrutiny as part of the work programme</p>	<p>challenge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge sessions are diarised at beginning of municipal year at various intervals (rather than just the end) 				programme	
	<p>Reduce volume of agenda items at committee meetings and help address limited committee meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of one-off challenge session to provide coverage on issues that warrant more detailed examination. 	<p>Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with scrutiny leads</p>	<p>May/ June 2021</p>			
	<p>O&S Work Programme (post committee sign off) to be circulated out to directorates as part of supporting directorate forward planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include likely Challenge sessions as they are confirmed 	<p>Strategy & Policy officers</p>	<p>May 2021</p>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme into O&S forward plan – review of service action plans based on challenge session recs. 	<p>Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with scrutiny leads</p>	<p>May/ June 2021</p>			
	<p>Improving Committees focus on issues – better forward planning (looking at topics earlier)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme in O&S forward plan less agenda items to facilitate in depth focus on issues which are more thematic in nature Engage DLT in work programme setting now before new 	<p>Scrutiny leads with support from scrutiny network</p>	<p>May/June 2021</p>			

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committees comes in so we have items 				
	Reduce gaps between sub-committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme into O&S forward plan more-subcommittee meetings earlier in the scrutiny year 	Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with Democratic Services and Scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		
	Combination of Spotlight and Challenge Session to facilitate in-depth focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of a light touch spotlight session on issue and follow up a more in-depth focus using scrutiny review/ challenge session. 	Strategy & Policy offices in liaison with Scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		
	Raising residents awareness on facility to ask questions on topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase level of comms to residents making them aware opportunity to ask questions on specific topics Using council comm tech such as SLIDO to help real-time (Interactive) questions from residents 				<p>Challenge - how topics and content information is shared with the public to help facilitate questions</p> <p>Needs to be carefully and selectively used for sessions.</p>
D. Represent residents and enable their concerns to inform Council decision making and policy development						
5.	Promote opportunities for resident to engage with scrutiny meetings	Develop a comms plan that publicises the OSC and its sub-committee meetings offering residents participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build comms actions into work programme and Action Log e.g. committee member to create video requesting info before 	O&S chair, Scrutiny Leads, Strategy & policy officers, Comms	May 2021	To be programmed in for next municipal year (2021-22) as part of O&S work programme

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge session Programme meetings in the community if possible and dependent on work programme 	officers			
	Promote council's online scrutiny suggestion of topics page annually along with the scrutiny mailbox as part of the wider scrutiny comms plan			from May 2021		To review and discuss with comms lead
	One-off resident led scrutiny topic (based on resident poll as key issue) within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads to consider where this could have best impact within their forward plan and how residents can be engaged with the session (possibly challenge session) 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with strategy & policy officers and Democratic services			To be considered when developing work programme
	Incorporate resident questions section within the committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads to ensure that the questions are received by a set time and programmed into the session at beginning or the end. 				
E. Evidence gathering: Ensure a wide range of witnesses are engaged, and evidence researched, to allow Scrutiny to make informed and effective recommendations						
6.	council explores where 'independent expertise' exists in the borough, taking account of existing networks and	Build opportunities for community members and stakeholders to give evidence at meetings and assist with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request relevant community and stakeholder contacts from Directorates and 	O&S Chair, Scrutiny Leads and Strategy &	from May 2021	

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contacts, and how this could be used to assist independent scrutiny of services.	evidence gathering	<p>Scrutiny Leads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote online Scrutiny engagement portals 	Policy officers			
	<p>Consider benchmarking with neighbouring or similar sized authorities to understand their approach including inviting scrutiny chairs from different authorities.</p> <p>Scrutiny Leads to be integrated into council's partnership working (thematic boards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief exercise comparing to other authorities Relevant partnership boards and opportunities identified Scrutiny leads invited to attend as appropriate Scrutiny Members Undertake site visit (where feasible and relevant) as part of developing intelligence for Committee meeting agenda 	O&S Chair, Scrutiny Leads and Strategy & Policy officers	from May 2021		
	Distribution of scrutiny agenda items amongst scrutiny member to help more in-depth focus of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Leads to spread agenda topics amongst Members to help sharpen the focus/ examination of the topic 	O&S Chair and Scrutiny Leads	May/Jun 2021 onwards		
	Reviewing the Cabinet Forward Plan to identify any controversial issues which need scrutiny's attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads need to more investigative approach with Cabinet members and officers on these topics via 1-2-1 				Challenge – timing - release of Cabinet forward plan i.e. 30 days prior to decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee to review the experience of the 				Feedback from CLT

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		borough from a Place wide perspective – branch out beyond the Council				
F. Scrutiny improves outcomes and drives improvement in public services						
Scrutiny Self Reflection on its work for 2020-21	To continue review using feedback surveys and capture the views Members, Co-optees, partners and officer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement Plan published. Reviewed informally throughout the year 	Strategy & Policy officers	March 22		
Reviewing Service Action Plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work programme in service action plans to confirm what's been delivered and if it needs to be called back in. 6 months check back Committee to improve the challenge for performance measures against the plan – ensure the officer is required to comeback with a better explanation next meeting 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with Strategy & Policy officers	May/Jun 2021		
G. Accountability & Culture: Nurture a culture of scrutiny and work closely with the Council's Cabinet Leads and Corporate Directors to encourage their buy-in and have open and honest conversations about performance, key issues and identify where scrutiny can add value						
7. Managing disagreement – Cultivating the relationship between Scrutiny Members and Executive	Develop an executive and scrutiny protocol which creates an expectations framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture expectations of information when requested by committee i.e. timely, 	O&S Chair / Scrutiny Leads, SSO and Strategy	TBC		To be explored for next municipal year 2021-22

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topical • Capture expectation of members focus at meetings 	and Policy officers			
8. Improving relations	<p>Scrutiny's relationship with Cabinet and officers</p> <p>Scrutiny's relationship with external partner organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect on all side whilst maintaining critical friend approach and taking a collaborative approach ensuring scrutiny adds value, has systematic focus upon what residents and service users are saying • Scrutiny's to establish approach to controversial issues and establishing rapport for a more open and honest dialogue • Developing a parity of esteem so that O&S function has equal weighting to that of executive. • Be honest and upfront with partner organisations invited to scrutiny meetings - let them know that scrutiny will challenge 	<p>Scrutiny leads</p> <p>Scrutiny leads</p> <p>O&S Chair and SSO</p> <p>Scrutiny leads</p>			

Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22

		<p>on what they bring to the meetings and what they say at the meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get buy-in from every level of the Council is needed for Overview and Scrutiny to function fully. The culture of O&S is key here, and a substantial shift needs to take place at an organisational level. 	O&S chair, SSO			
9. Improving scrutiny's representation	Improving No of opposition Members on Scrutiny Committees		Members to review at the AGM			Current Opposition Members feel it's a challenge to look at issue in-depth when covering so many areas.
Improving Council's engagement with Scrutiny	Facilitation better transparency on agenda issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OSC and its sub-committees to encourage council services to bring areas of concern to the committee so that work can be undertaken to review and add value to workstreams Ensuring that the right officer is in place to provide response on 				

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		cross cutting topics such as the budget – to provide better accountability.				
	Create scope for Scrutiny Members to participate at boards and panel groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map our relevant partnership boards Scrutiny Leads to be invited 	Scrutiny Leads and Strategy & Policy officers			To be explored for next municipal year 2021-22
	Clarity on decision making process and openness from departments to share in a timely and regular manner	<p>Scrutiny to request documents such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation reports – prepared by the council departments and by partners Public health updates - specific reports on the spread of the disease and mitigation and suppression measures Action trackers – service by service, and corporately 				
	Escalation mechanism for risk issues to council statutory officers Head of Paid Service, Monitoring officer S151 officer	Scrutiny to red flag where it identifies clear risk to the council on issues identified within the committee meetings as a support mechanism for governance.	Statutory Scrutiny Officer in liaison with O&S committee chair			

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Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2021-22

RAG status	Missed target requires action	On target but with minor issues	Completed action
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A. Aims & Objectives: All Members, officers and residents in Tower Hamlets to understand the role of scrutiny and what it aims to achieve

Objectives	Priority	Action	Owner(s)	Delivery	RAG	Comments
1. O&S has a clearly defined and valued role in the Council's improvement and governance arrangements and includes prioritising to ensure that the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority	Establish engagement dialogue between scrutiny leads with Cabinet portfolio holders and senior council officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each scrutiny lead to diarise quarterly meetings with relevant officers and Cabinet members 	Strategy & Policy officers	May/June 21		Needs to be ongoing on a regular basis each municipal year
	Create comms plan for Overview and Scrutiny's toolkit and public user guide and publicity of O&S meetings via to various comms channel	<p>What does this look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video at away day for comms channels Publicise committee meetings via Council comms and partner channels Create channel mechanism to update and feedback to residents on activity, outcomes etc. Publicise one-off scrutiny review and challenge sessions Publicise scrutiny reports via social media channels – both comms and Members Build a high level one-page summary template for committee meeting activities i.e. 	Strategy & Policy officers, Comms officers	Summer 21		Invite external comms lead to discuss best approach

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		<p>topic discussed, KLE's actions/recs to inform residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members also to create interest via their social media feeds such as videos Comms support to help resident engagement better with scrutiny – (options) 				
	Create separate plan for the publication of the Committees Work		Strategy and Policy officers in discussion with the Scrutiny Leads			
	Scrutiny to get involved earlier in policy development and pre-decision scrutiny	Use the 1-2-1 with Cabinet Member and officers to raise this as an item of discussion	Scrutiny Leads	May/June 2021		
2. O&S Members have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their roles effectively	<p>Establish an annual training package for Scrutiny Members to aid them with developing key skills required to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Include internal training options where possible such as briefing sessions for finance and audit, risk management, performance,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put likely briefing dates in diary Need to undertake a skills audit of Scrutiny members to understand training needs and develop programme Create training need matrix Working with CfGS to ensure Members development 	Strategy & Policy officers working closely with CD's DDs, HoS for service areas	Summer 21		<p>Target next municipal year for comprehensive training programme</p> <p>Available access Audit's training programme for Members</p> <p>Delivered briefing session induction, business rate reset and strategic plan</p>

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	<p>Developing better understanding of financial and policy context</p> <p>Members understanding the range of service areas within the portfolio</p> <p>Developing learning in key areas which will help strengthen scrutiny's role and impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members induction with specific portfolio areas Members undertaking site visits where applicable to develop their knowledge base Source training to help understand Council finances i.e. Pensions Fund, Treasury, Management, Acquisitions & Disposals, Budget Setting, Councils Reserves & Outturn Monitoring, and Risk Management 				
B. Meeting Administration: All scrutiny meetings to be run in a professional and highly efficient way to enable effective scrutiny to take place						
3. O&S meetings and activities are well-planned, chaired effectively and make best use of the resources available to it	<p>Scrutiny chairs delegating to committee members to take on a more active role for the next scrutiny meeting topic leading to better engagement and ownership from members and more robust research and evidence</p> <p>All papers to be shared with Members (a week in advance of the committee meeting) to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny members to meet informally once a month to discuss priorities for committee agendas and report development Information and themes to be 	<p>O&S Chair and Scrutiny Leads</p> <p>Divisional Directors and</p>	<p>Monthly from Summer 21</p> <p>Jan 2021</p>		<p>To review approach at scrutiny away day – reflection/improvements</p> <p>Timing needs to be found</p> <p>Further review as part of the planning</p>

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	<p>allow Members sufficient time to review the papers and establish key lines of enquiry for the item.</p>	<p>requested at beginning of calendar month before committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the information well before the meeting so that they are well prepared what needs to be asked and what needs to be done. • Committees could use more case studies and open to more community members and group involvement. • Scrutinise decisions based on clear set of factors e.g., finances, risk, impact, • Scoping out agenda items for committee meetings to help better use of time / questioning with more focus and purpose. • Members raising residents concern at Committee meetings • Balance between officers/ Members given sufficient time to present on massive issues 	<p>or Heads of Service, Strategy & Policy officers</p>			<p>process for next municipal year</p>
	<p>Improve focus of pre-meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have an pre-agenda template for discussion at pre- 	<p>Scrutiny leads</p>			

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		meets to help focus and perform better at meetings				
	Improve scope to include case studies, external organisations, hearing from residents and or local groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a stakeholder mapping within scope of the agenda items to ensure that the relevant people are attending the meeting. 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with Strategy & Policy officers	May 2021 onwards		
C. Work Programme: Develop and deliver a coordinated work programme across all scrutiny committees which supports the council to achieve its strategic objectives and reflects the concerns of residents						
4. O&S Committee and it's sub-committees develop a work programme, focusing on priority areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement agenda Delivering the strategic plan Linking performance and budget scrutiny 	Scrutiny support to assist scrutiny members with research and analysis on progress made over the last year including timetabling in service action plans to come back to scrutiny as part of the work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each committee and sub-committee meeting to have one area of spotlight or challenge. Challenge sessions are diarised at beginning of municipal year at various intervals (rather than just the end) 	Strategy & Policy officers	May 2021		To be programmed in for next municipal year (2021-22) as part of O&S work programme
	Reduce volume of agenda items at committee meetings and help address limited committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of one-off challenge session to provide coverage on issues that warrant more detailed examination. 	Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		
	O&S Work Programme (post committee sign off) to be circulated out to directorates as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include likely Challenge sessions as they are confirmed 	Strategy & Policy officers	May 2021		

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part of supporting directorate forward planning.						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme into O&S forward plan – review of service action plans based on challenge session recs. 	Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		
	Improving Committees focus on issues – better forward planning (looking at topics earlier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme in O&S forward plan less agenda items to facilitate in depth focus on issues which are more thematic in nature Engage DLT in work programme setting now before new Committees comes in so we have items 	Scrutiny leads with support from scrutiny network	May/June 2021		
	Reduce gaps between sub-committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To programme into O&S forward plan more-subcommittee meetings earlier in the scrutiny year 	Strategy & Policy officers in liaison with Democratic Services and Scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		
	Combination of Spotlight and Challenge Session to facilitate in-depth focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of a light touch spotlight session on issue and follow up a more in-depth focus using scrutiny review/ challenge session. 	Strategy & Policy offices in liaison with Scrutiny leads	May/ June 2021		

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	Raising residents awareness on facility to ask questions on topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase level of comms to residents making them aware opportunity to ask questions on specific topics Using council comm tech such as SLIDO to help real-time (Interactive) questions from residents 				<p>Challenge - how topics and content information is shared with the public to help facilitate questions</p> <p>Needs to be carefully and selectively used for sessions.</p>
D. Represent residents and enable their concerns to inform Council decision making and policy development						
5. Promote opportunities for resident to engage with scrutiny meetings	Develop a comms plan that publicises the OSC and its sub-committee meetings offering residents participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build comms actions into work programme and Action Log eg committee member to create video requesting info before Challenge session Programme meetings in the community if possible and dependent on work programme 	O&S chair, Scrutiny Leads, Strategy & policy officers, Comms officers	May 2021		To be programmed in for next municipal year (2021-22) as part of O&S work programme
	Promote council's online scrutiny suggestion of topics page annually along with the scrutiny mailbox as part of the wider scrutiny comms plan			from May 2021		To review and discuss with comms lead
	One-off resident led scrutiny topic (based on resident poll as key issue) within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads to consider where this could have best impact within their 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with strategy & policy officers			To be considered when developing work programme

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		forward plan and how residents can be engaged with the session (possibly challenge session)	and Democratic services				
	Incorporate resident questions section within the committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads to ensure that the questions are received by a set time and programmed into the session at beginning or the end. 					
E. Evidence gathering: Ensure a wide range of witnesses are engaged, and evidence researched, to allow Scrutiny to make informed and effective recommendations							
6.	council explores where 'independent expertise' exists in the borough, taking account of existing networks and contacts, and how this could be used to assist independent scrutiny of services.	Build opportunities for community members and stakeholders to give evidence at meetings and assist with evidence gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request relevant community and stakeholder contacts from Directorates and Scrutiny Leads Promote online Scrutiny engagement portals 	O&S Chair, Scrutiny Leads and Strategy & Policy officers	from May 2021		
		Consider benchmarking with neighbouring or similar sized authorities to understand their approach including inviting scrutiny chairs from different authorities. Scrutiny Leads to be integrated into council's partnership working (thematic boards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief exercise comparing to other authorities Relevant partnership boards and opportunities identified Scrutiny leads invited to attend as appropriate Scrutiny Members Undertake site visit (where feasible and 	O&S Chair, Scrutiny Leads and Strategy & Policy officers	from May 2021		

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		relevant) as part of developing intelligence for Committee meeting agenda				
	Distribution of scrutiny agenda items amongst scrutiny member to help more in-depth focus of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Leads to spread agenda topics amongst Members to help sharpen the focus/ examination of the topic 	O&S Chair and Scrutiny Leads	May/Jun 2021 onwards		
	Reviewing the Cabinet Forward Plan to identify any controversial issues which need scrutiny's attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny leads need to more investigative approach with Cabinet members and officers on these topics via 1-2-1 				Challenge – timing - release of Cabinet forward plan i.e. 30 days prior to decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee to review the experience of the borough from a Place wide perspective – branch out beyond the Council 				Feedback from CLT
F. Scrutiny improves outcomes and drives improvement in public services						
Scrutiny Self Reflection on its work for 2020-21	To continue review using feedback surveys and capture the views Members, Co-optees, partners and officer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement Plan published. Reviewed informally throughout the year 	Strategy & Policy officers	March 22		
Reviewing Service Action Plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work programme in service action plans to confirm what's been delivered and if it 	Scrutiny leads in liaison with	May/Jun 2021		

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		<p>needs to be called back in. 6 months check back</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee to improve the challenge for performance measures against the plan – ensure the officer is required to comeback with a better explanation next meeting 	Strategy & Policy officers			
G. Accountability & Culture: Nurture a culture of scrutiny and work closely with the Council's Cabinet Leads and Corporate Directors to encourage their buy-in and have open and honest conversations about performance, key issues and identify where scrutiny can add value						
7. Managing disagreement – Cultivating the relationship between Scrutiny Members and Executive	Develop an executive and scrutiny protocol which creates an expectations framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture expectations of information when requested by committee i.e. timely, topical Capture expectation of members focus at meetings 	O&S Chair / Scrutiny Leads, SSO and Strategy and Policy officers	TBC		To be explored for next municipal year 2021-22
8. Improving relations	Scrutiny's relationship with Cabinet and officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect on all side whilst maintaining critical friend approach and taking a collaborative approach ensuring scrutiny adds value, has systematic focus upon what residents and service users are saying 	Scrutiny leads			

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	<p>Scrutiny's relationship with external partner organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny's to establish approach to controversial issues and establishing rapport for a more open and honest dialogue • Developing a parity of esteem so that O&S function has equal weighting to that of executive. • Be honest and upfront with partner organisations invited to scrutiny meetings - let them know that scrutiny will challenge on what they bring to the meetings and what they say at the meetings. • Get buy-in from every level of the Council is needed for Overview and Scrutiny to function fully. The culture of O&S is key here, and a substantial shift needs to take place at an organisational level. 	<p>Scrutiny leads</p> <p>O&S Chair and SSO</p> <p>Scrutiny leads</p> <p>O&S chair, SSO</p>			
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9. Improving scrutiny's representation	Improving No of opposition Members on Scrutiny Committees		Members to review at the AGM			Current Opposition Members feel it's a challenge to look at issue in-depth when covering so many areas.
Improving Council's engagement with Scrutiny	Facilitation better transparency on agenda issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC and its sub-committees to encourage council services to bring areas of concern to the committee so that work can be undertaken to review and add value to workstreams • Ensuring that the right officer is in place to provide response on cross cutting topics such as the budget – to provide better accountability. 				
	Create scope for Scrutiny Members to participate at boards and panel groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map our relevant partnership boards • Scrutiny Leads to be invited 	Scrutiny Leads and Strategy & Policy officers			To be explored for next municipal year 2021-22
	Clarity on decision making process and openness from departments to share in a timely and regular manner	<p>Scrutiny to request documents such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation reports – prepared by the council departments and by partners 				

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public health updates - specific reports on the spread of the disease and mitigation and suppression measures Action trackers – service by service, and corporately 				
	Escalation mechanism for risk issues to council statutory officers Head of Paid Service, Monitoring officer S151 officer	Scrutiny to red flag where it identifies clear risk to the council on issues identified within the committee meetings as a support mechanism for governance.	Statutory Scrutiny Officer in liaison with O&S committee chair			

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