

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.33 P.M. ON MONDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2022

**ROOM C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Mohammed Pappu (Chair)

Councillor Bex White (Vice-Chair)	– Scrutiny Lead for Children’s & Education
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	– Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety
Councillor Marc Francis	
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
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Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Candida Ronald
Mayor John Biggs
Councillor Rachel Blake
Councillor Sirajul Islam

Apologies:

Councillor Ehtasham Haque	– Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration
Afazul Hoque	– Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy – oversight of scrutiny function
Denise Radley	– Corporate Director of Health, Adults and Community
Will Tuckley	– Chief Executive

Officers Present:

Sharon Godman	– (Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation)
Kevin Bartle	– (Corporate Director, Resources &

Daniel Kerr	– (Strategy and Policy Manager)
Judith St John	– (Director, Commissioning and Culture, Children’s Services)
Ann Sutcliffe	– (Corporate Director, Place)
Nisar Visram	– (Director of Finance, Procurement & Audit)
Ann Corbett	– (Director, Community Safety)
Jane Abraham	– (Head of Capital Delivery)
Katie O’Driscoll	– (Director of Adult Social Care)
Filuck Miah	– (Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Policy Team)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

- 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 Rachel Blake due to her husband Marc Francis being a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil Items

3. REPORT/PRESENTATION FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The review the Budget Proposals

The Committee was reminded that at its January meeting (**See Minute 4.1 – 24th January 2022**) [Tower Hamlets Council - Agenda for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 7th February, 2022, 6.30 p.m.](#) they had **(i)** received and reviewed the Council's 2022-23 Budget Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022-25 as part of the 2022-23 budget setting process, **(ii)** examined the key issues and pressures facing the Council such as the growth pressures and the need for efficiencies to ensure financial sustainability going forward; and **(iii)** noted that further information had been added to the budget proposals, including information on the capital programme and the allocation of one-off growth funding. A summary of the discussions and feedback provided is outlined below:

The Committee:

- ❖ **Considered** the updated information and in view of the latest information provided, Members reiterated the argument’s that they had made following the first meeting (**See Minute 4.1 and 4.2 – 24th January 2022**) [Tower Hamlets Council - Agenda for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 7th February, 2022, 6.30 p.m.](#)

- ❖ **Agreed** that it wished to see a more strategic and sustainable approach for the allocation of supplementary reserves.
- ❖ **Placed** on record that there should be a focus on investing more on fewer areas to ensure a more sustainable and tangible impact.
- ❖ **Recommended** that previously agreed savings for 2022-23 should be reviewed and consideration given to what is still necessary and what can be delayed.
- ❖ **Recommended** it would like further clarity on the Technology Enabled Care saving. The budget line/reference SAV/HAC 005/21-22. However, when the budget was agreed last year, this reference was used for the 'reduction in service, partnership support and management – Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Hate Crime and Community Safety Teams SAV.' Accordingly, Members **stated** that they would like a note to understand whether this is a new saving or if it remains the old saving.
- ❖ Whilst **pleased** to see that additional investment that will be given to strengthen the resource and capacity of the Waste service. However, as part of the previously agreed savings for 2022-23, there was £100,000 for Waste Service reorganisation. Therefore, Members **questioned** whether this will be delayed or reprofiled for an additional year and would like further information on this.
- ❖ **Indicated** that it would like to see the previously agreed savings included in the final budget papers presented to Full Council to ensure full transparency and good governance.

As a result of a full and wide-ranging discussion on the budget proposals the Chair **(i)** thanked all those attendees for their contributions to the discussions on the changes to the MTFs; and **(ii)** moved and the Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Agree** the following additional recommendations.

- A. **Recommendation 8:** Provide OSC with a briefing note setting out the position of the Waste Services Reorganisation and the Technology Enabled Care Saving.
- B. **Recommendation 9:** Include a list of the previously agreed savings for 2022-23 in the budget papers presented to Full Council.

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

With no other business to discuss the Chair called this meeting to a close; thanked all those attending for their contributions and informed the Committee that the next meeting would be on Monday, 21st February 2022.

5. **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.

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

Nil items

**Chair, Councillor Mohammed Pappu
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**