



Meeting of the

# Tower Hamlets Council

## Agenda

**Wednesday, 27 July 2022 at 7.00 p.m.**

### **VENUE**

Council Chamber, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
Town Hall, Mulberry Place,  
5 Clove Crescent,  
London E14 2BG

### **Meeting Webcast**

The meeting is being webcast for viewing through the Council's webcast system.  
<http://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. The press and public are encouraged to watch the meeting on line.

### **Democratic Services Contact:**

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## Chief Executive's Office

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### **To the Mayor and Councillors of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to be held in **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG** at **7.00 p.m.** on **WEDNESDAY, 27 JULY 2022**

Will Tuckley  
Chief Executive



## Public Information

### Viewing Council Meetings

Except where any exempt/restricted documents are being discussed, the public are welcome to view this meeting through the Council's webcast system.

### Meeting Webcast and Public attendance

The meeting is being webcast for viewing through the Council's webcast system. <http://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> The press and public are encouraged to watch this meeting on line

**Please note:** Whilst the meeting is open to the public, the public seating in the meeting room for observers will be limited due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions. You must contact the Democratic Services Officer to reserve a place, to be allocated on a first come first served basis. No one will be admitted unless they have registered in advance.

### Electronic agendas reports and minutes.

Copies of agendas, reports and minutes for council meetings can also be found on our website from day of publication.

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QR code for  
smart phone  
users

## **Public Information**

The meeting is being held at the Council's Town Hall.

Full Council is made up of the Mayor and the 45 Councillors. It's responsibilities include: deciding the Council's overall policies and setting the budget for the year. It also appoints the Council's Committees at the Annual Meeting. In addition, the Council provides opportunities to discuss local issues and is a means by which the Mayor and Cabinet can be held to account in public

The agenda for this ordinary Council meetings comprises:

- Apologies for absence from Members
- Declarations of Interests.
- Minutes of the previous meeting.
- Announcements from the Speaker or the Chief Executive of the Council.
- Petitions for presentation (over 30 signatures) or for debate (over 2000 signatures). A maximum of 4 Petitions that meet the criteria may be discussed taken in the order of receipt.
- Mayor's report followed by Opposition Leader's response. Written report to be published shortly before the meeting.
- Main Motion debates (including any amendments received)
- Reports requiring Full Council approval
- Member Questions (30 minutes). Questions not put to receive a written response.
- Motions from Members received on notice (including any amendments received). Consideration of these subject to time constraints.
- Any Urgent motions from Members.

Further details on the process for considering these items is set out on the covering reports in the agenda.

### **How can I watch the meeting?**

Except when an exempt item is under discussion, the meeting will be broadcast live for public viewing via our Webcasting portal <https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. Details of the broadcasting arrangements will be published on the agenda front sheet.

### **Public Attendance and Conduct at Meetings**

The public may also watch the Council meeting in the public gallery. To attend please collect a ticket from reception at the town hall. We request that you show courtesy to all present and do not interrupt the meeting. The intention is not to specifically webcast members of the public, however, it is possible that you may be filmed in the background. By attending the meeting you are agreeing to this condition.

Please also switch off mobile phones or turn them on silent.

If you are scheduled to present a petition in person at the meeting, please sit in the reserved seating in the front row. You will be called to address the meeting at the appropriate time

If the fire alarm rings please follow the instructions of the Facilities Staff who will direct you to the exits.



### **Procedure at the meeting.**

Just before the start of the meeting, the macebearer will ask everyone to be upstanding for the Speaker. The Speaker of the Council is the Chair of the meeting and is in charge of the debate. Their role is to control the meeting, including the order of speakers, and to ensure that the business is carried out properly. The Speaker will confirm the expected meeting etiquette for Council meeting, including the following:

- The Speaker will determine the order of speakers - usually from a list of speakers.
- That any online participants must mute their microphones when not speaking.
- Such participants should also switch off their cameras when not speaking.
- All Members may contribute to the discussions, but only the Members physically present in the chamber may vote on items requiring a decision.

### **Order of business**

The Speaker may agree to change the order of business at the meeting. In addition, the Speaker may adjourn the meeting for a period of time or agree an extension to the time limit for the meeting (by up to half hour beyond the three-hour limit). To change the order of business, a Member will need to formally move a motion seeking approval for the requested change. Any such motions will be put to the vote.

### **Voting**

The items requiring a decision will normally be determined by a show of hands or an electronic vote (by Members present in the meeting room). If there are an equal number of votes for and against an item of business, the Speaker will have a second or casting vote.

### **Decisions and Minutes**

The decisions will be published on the website 2 days after the meeting. The draft minutes will be published around 10 working days after the meeting.

### **Publication of Agenda papers.**

Electronic copies of the Council agenda will be published on the Council's Website on the relevant Committee pages at least five clear working days before the meeting.

To view meeting papers and to be alerted when agendas have been published visit: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee). Council documents are also available on 'Mod.Gov' iPad, Android and Windows tablet apps downloadable for free from their respective app stores.

### **Publication of tabled papers**

Any additional documents (such as the Mayor's report, amendments to motions and urgent motions) will normally be published on the Council meeting website either shortly before or during the meeting.



# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## Council

Wednesday, 27 July 2022

7.00 p.m.

### PAGE NUMBER

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

9 - 10

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest, identified 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, see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

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

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

#### 3. MINUTES

11 - 20

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022

#### 4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### 5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

21 - 24

The Council Procedure Rules provide for a maximum of four petitions to be discussed at an Ordinary Meeting of the Council.

The attached report presents the received petitions to be discussed. Should any additional petitions be received they will be listed to be noted



but not discussed.

## **6. MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Council's Constitution provides for the Elected Mayor to give a report at each Ordinary Council Meeting.

A maximum of six minutes is allowed for the Elected Mayor's report, following which the Speaker of the Council will invite the leaders of the opposition groups to respond for up to two minutes each should they so wish. Following those contributions, the Mayor may reply for up to two minutes.

## **7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE 25 - 26**

To debate a Motion submitted by the Administration in accordance with Rules 11 and 13 of the Council's Constitution. The debate will last for a maximum of 30 minutes.

## **8. OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE 27 - 30**

To debate a Motion submitted by the Opposition Group in accordance with Rules 11 and 13 of the Council's Constitution. The debate will last for a maximum of 30 minutes.

## **9. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

### **9.1 Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22 31 - 56**

### **9.2 Report of the Standards Advisory Committee: Standards Advisory Committee Annual Report 2021-22 57 - 78**

### **9.3 Report of the Corporate Parenting Board: Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021 79 - 112**

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 Administrative Matters, Committee Chairs, Member Allowances Scheme 113 - 116**

## **11. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL 117 - 122**

The questions which have been received from Councillors to be put at this Council meeting are set out in the attached report. A maximum period of 30 minutes is allocated to this agenda item.



## 12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

To Follow

The motions submitted by Councillors for debate at this meeting are set out in the attached report (to follow).





# 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, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4348.

## **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 COUNCIL**

**HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 25 MAY 2022**

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5  
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Councillor Kabir Hussain
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Kamrul Hussain
Councillor Leelu Ahmed	Councillor Shubo Hussain
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	Councillor Asma Islam
Councillor Saied Ahmed	Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	Councillor Ahmodul Kabir
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Ahmodur Khan
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	Councillor Sabina Khan
Councillor Amina Ali	Councillor James King
Councillor Asma Begum	Councillor Amy Lee
Councillor Maisha Begum	Councillor Abdul Malik
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	Councillor Abdul Mannan
Councillor Rachel Blake	Councillor Ana Miah
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury	Councillor Ayas Miah
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Jahed Choudhury	Councillor Amin Rahman
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	Councillor Rebaka Sultana
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury	Councillor Maium Talukdar
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor Bellal Uddin
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	Councillor Abdul Wahid
Mohammed Ahabab Hossain	

**Members Present Virtually:**

Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

**The Speaker of the Council, Mohammed Ahabab Hossain in the Chair**

With great sadness the Speaker regretted to report that Abdul Gaffar Choudhury, has sadly passed away. He was a Freeman of the Borough in Tower Hamlets and a celebrated writer, political analyst and poet. The Council's thoughts are with his family at this difficult time.

The Council observed a minute silence to remember Gaffar Choudhury

## 1. ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Speaker of the Council, Mohammed Ahab Hossain addressed the meeting about his time in office.

He thanked the Council, including the former Mayor, John Biggs and Councillors, for giving him this unique opportunity to serve as the First Citizen of the Borough, since September 2020

He noted that, whilst his term began during the height of the pandemic, he had made every effort to carry out his duties in the best way he could, mostly by attending virtual events. During this period, he was particularly proud to have participated in a range of events, aimed at supporting the community at this very difficult time. These included:

- An inter faith event to bring comfort to residents.
- A programme of celebration events to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bangladesh, which started on – line.
- Council led events to commemorate all those who had lost their lives during the pandemic and to thank those who had worked tirelessly to support the sick and vulnerable in their communities.

Following the easing of restrictions, he had made a real point of engaging with the community in person to celebrate their achievements. He had tried his best to reach out to as many organisations as he could.

He also stated that he was very proud to have hosted only the second Freedom of the Borough ceremony in the last 20 years, and the first at the Tower of London. The contributions of the five recipients were truly outstanding.

He had also held a very successful Charity Ball in December in Canary Wharf. He thanked all of the people and organisations who supported these events especially the sponsors for each. The final fundraising figure has yet to be confirmed. The money will be donated to the Speaker's chosen charities: Capital Kids Cricket, Patchwork Foundation and Soyttan Sen School of Performing Arts.

He also confirmed that the Council had been finally able to hold the Civic Awards again, to thank those who had worked tirelessly for the community.

Other key highlights of his term included: his visit to Bangladesh, where he had the honour of meeting local dignitaries and attending a range of events.

He had also been very proud to Chair meetings of Full Council.

He concluded by thanking his consort and all the Council Officers that had supported him. He also wished the new Speaker the very best for the year ahead.

Following the Speaker's address, the following Councillors addressed the meeting:

- Councillor Kabir Ahmed
- Councillor Sabina Akhtar
- Councillor Peter Golds
- Councillor Maium Talukdar
- Councillor Ohid Ahmed
- Councillor Sirajul Islam
- Councillor Ayas Miah

The Councillors acknowledged that the Speaker had taken on the role at a difficult time. However, he had shown great leadership and had been an excellent role model for the community. He had also been approachable to all.

They also welcomed that he had worked so tirelessly to reach out to all sections of the community. He had shown great support to many community organisations and good causes particularly during the pandemic. The Speaker had achieved so much and had raised a significant amount of money for charity.

The Councillors thanked the Speaker for all his good work and his service to the Borough during his term. They wished him well for the future.

The Speaker then called for nominations to serve as Speaker of the Council for the coming year.

The following nominations were proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Shafi Ahmed be elected to serve as Speaker of the Council until May 2023

It was **moved** by Councillor Sirajul Islam and **seconded** by Councillor Sabina Akhtar that Councillor Amina Ali be elected to serve as Speaker of the Council until May 2023.

The nomination to elect Councillor Shafi Ahmed to serve as Speaker of the Council as the first nomination received was put to the vote and was **agreed** on a majority vote.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That Councillor Shafi Ahmed be elected to serve as Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2023.

Councillor Maium Talukdar and Councillor Kabir Ahmed then came forward to witness the Speaker of the Council signing the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.30pm and reconvened at 7.35pm.

**The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Shafi Ahmed in the Chair**

The incoming Speaker, Councillor Shafi Ahmed thanked the Council for electing him as Speaker, especially since he was a relatively new Councillor. He congratulated the outgoing speaker on a successful term in office and welcomed all new members, returning Members and the new Mayor on their election victories.

To support the Speaker in his role, he would be accompanied by his consorts:

- Abdul Alim and
- Saadiyah Ahmed.

He noted that these were difficult times. Therefore, it was important that the Council and the Borough worked together to continue to provide opportunities for everyone and promote an inclusive society. In view of this, he expressed a commitment in the year ahead to encourage community engagement and build respect and harmony across age and cultural divides.

Finally, the Speaker reported that he intended to support one charity dedicated to helping children with autism in the Borough. He would confirm at the next Council meeting his chosen charity.

**2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER**

The Speaker sought nominations to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

The following nominations were proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Harun Miah be elected to serve as the Deputy Speaker of the Council for 2022/23.

It was **moved** by Councillor Amina Ali and **seconded** by Councillor Sabina Akhtar that Councillor Rebaka Sultana be elected to serve as Speaker of the Council of the Council for 2022/23.

The nomination to elect Councillor Harun Miah to serve as Speaker of the Council as the first nomination received was put to the vote and was **agreed** on a majority vote

**RESOLVED**

1. That Councillor Harun Miah be elected to serve as Deputy Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council meeting in May 2023.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Faroque Ahmed

**4. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

**5. MINUTES****RESOLVED:**

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting held on 16th March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and the Speaker be authorised to sign them accordingly

**6. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive addressed the meeting.

He congratulated the Speaker on his appointment and the Mayor and Councillors on their election victories. The Council looked forward to working with them. He also advised of his plans to provide a report to the General Purposes Committee regarding the conduct of the election. His initial view was that the arrangements had worked well. He thanked everyone who had worked on the election, particularly the Elections Services Team.

Regarding staffing matters, Vicky Clark, (Director of Integrated Growth & Development) would be leaving the Council in June 2022. In addition, Judith St. John, (Director of Commissioning and Culture) was also due to leave in July 2022, after over 35 years of service. They were both thanked for their hard work and dedication, while with the Council

Turning to awards, the Council had been nominated for a number of awards. These were: from the Municipal Journal, the Local Authority of the year award and four Local Government Chronical awards. These were in the following categories: Public Health, large team of the year (for growth and economic development), digital impact and the most improved Council. The winners would be announced in June and July 2022.

**7. MAYOR'S CABINET AND EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, (circulated in a supplementary agenda) setting out the Mayor's Cabinet appointments and other arrangements in respect of Executive Decision Making.

The recommendation was **agreed**.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Mayor's Executive Scheme of Delegation be noted

**8. GROUP ARRANGEMENTS, PROPORTIONALITY AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES ON COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2022/23**

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, proposing the establishment of the Council's committees for 2022/23 and setting out the review of proportionality and the allocation of places on those Committees.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the review of proportionality as at section 3 of the report and the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub – Committees for the Municipal Year 2022/23 as set out at paragraph 3.12 be agreed;
2. That the Committees set out for the municipal year 2022/23 be established and places be allocated on those Committees, as set out at paragraph 3.12 of the report.
3. Note the update on general group arrangements.

**9. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2022-23**

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, regarding the appointment of members to the Council's Committees, and Chairs where appropriate, (including those established under item 8 above). The list of nominations were circulated in a supplementary agenda.

Following the receipt of competing nominations for Chairs of several Committees and for Committee places, the nominations were put to a vote. This was in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.8.



The following Councillors were elected to these positions:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Committee Chair</b>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Musthak Ahmed
Development Committee	Councillor Abdul Wahid
Strategic Development Committee	Councillor Amin Rahman
General Purposes Committee	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled
Audit Committee	Councillor Abdul Malik
Pensions Committee	Councillor Bellal Uddin
Licensing Committee	Councillor Kamrul Hussain

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Committee Place (s)</b>
Pensions Board	Councillor Abdul Mannan
Adoption and Fostering Panel	Councillor Bodrul Choudhury Councillor Iqbal Hossain
Local Government Group Annual Conference	Councillor Maium Talukdar Councillor Kabir Ahmed Councillor Abdul Malik Councillor Abdul Mannan

The recommendations subject to the above appointments, were **agreed**.

### **RESOLVED**

1. The members and substitute members to the committees and sub - committees of the Council and other bodies for the municipal year 2022/23 be appointed as set out in the list of tabled nominations, published in the supplementary agenda.
2. That the Chairs of Committees for 2022/23 be appointed from amongst the list of tabled nominations subject to the following:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Committee Chair</b>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Musthak Ahmed
Development Committee	Councillor Abdul Wahid
Strategic Development Committee	Councillor Amin Rahman

General Purposes Committee	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled
Audit Committee	Councillor Abdul Malik
Pensions Committee	Councillor Bellal Uddin
Licensing Committee	Councillor Kamrul Hussain

Committee	Committee Place (s)
Pensions Board	Councillor Abdul Mannan
Adoption and Fostering Panel	Councillor Bodrul Choudhury Councillor Iqbal Hossain
Local Government Group Annual Conference	Councillor Maium Talukdar Councillor Kabir Ahmed Councillor Abdul Malik Councillor Abdul Mannan

3. That in relation to any unfilled places within the seats allocated to a particular political group, the Council note that the Director of Legal, as Monitoring Officer has delegated authority subsequently to agree the appointments to those places in accordance with nominations from the relevant political group.

## 10. COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2022-23

The Council considered the report setting out a revised calendar of meetings for the Council, Committees and other meetings for the municipal year 2022/23.

Members were also asked to note the following changes:

- 13<sup>th</sup> July Council meeting moved to Wednesday 27 July 2022.
- 25<sup>th</sup> July Overview and Scrutiny Committee moved to Thursday 28 July 2022.
- 27<sup>th</sup> July Cabinet moved to Monday 1 August 2022.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

### RESOLVED

1. That the proposed amended calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2022/23 be approved as set out in Appendix A of the report, subject to the following changes to dates:
- 13<sup>th</sup> July Council meeting moved to Wednesday 27 July 2022.
  - 25<sup>th</sup> July Overview and Scrutiny Committee moved to Thursday 28 July 2022.

- 27<sup>th</sup> July Cabinet moved to Monday 1 August 2022.
- 2. That the Monitoring Officer be delegated the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.
- 3. To note that the Constitution provides for the Monitoring Officer to agree to cancel, amend a meeting or arrange new meetings where required, subject to the requirements of the Council Procedure Rules.

## 11. APPOINTMENT OF POLITICAL ADVISORS

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, regarding the appointment of political advisors.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

### RESOLVED

1. Agree to re-establish for the duration of the current administration, posts of political assistants (known as Political Advisors) to those political groups that qualify for such a post in accordance with section 9 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
2. To appoint 1 FTE to the Aspire Group and 1 FTE to the Labour Group.
3. Agree that the relevant staffing budget be adjusted as necessary to cover the costs associated with the above posts

## 12. COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION 2022-23

The Council considered the report of the General Purposes Committee, setting out the Council's Constitution including the new Member Code of Conduct.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

### RESOLVED

1. Note the work of the General Purposes Committee throughout the year to support the Constitution.
2. Agree to confirm the re-adoption of the Council's Constitution as set out at Appendices 1-4 to the report.

**13. LOCALISM ACT 2011 - PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23**

The Council considered the report of the General Purposes Committee setting out the pay policy statement for 2022/23.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

**RESOLVED**

1. To adopt the 2022/23 pay policy statement.
2. To delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support, Chair of the GP Committee and Monitoring Officer, any minor changes to the 2022/23 pay policy statement.

**14. USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY PROCEDURES 2021/22**

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, setting out when Special Urgency provisions have been applied to Executive Key Decisions.

The recommendation was **agreed**.


**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report on the use of special urgency provisions in relation to Executive Key Decisions be noted

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Speaker of the Council

# Agenda Item 5

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Council</b>  27 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Petitions to Council</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. This report sets out details of the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The text of the petition received for presentation to this meeting is set out in the attached report.
2. The Council's Constitution provides for up to four petitions to be heard at each ordinary Council meeting. These are taken in order of receipt, except that petitions for debate (those in excess of 2,000 signatures) will take precedence. Should more than four petitions be received, all remaining petitions will be listed to be formally noted by Council.
3. For Petitions listed as to be heard:
  - a. Petitioners may address the meeting for no more than 3 minutes.
  - b. Members may then question the petitioners for a further 4 minutes.
  - c. Finally, the speaker will invite the Mayor or (at the Mayor's discretion) the relevant Lead Member or Committee Chair to respond to the petition for up to 2 minutes. The petition will then be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will provide a written response within 28 days of the date of the meeting.
4. Members, other than a Cabinet Member or Committee Chair responding at the end of the item, should confine their contributions to questions and not make statements or attempt to debate.
5. For Petitions listed as to be noted, petitioners may not address the meeting. The Speaker will state where they will go for a full response.

6. Responses to all petitions will be sent to the lead petitioner and displayed on the Council's website.

## **PETITIONS FOR DEBATE**

There are no petitions for debate.

## **PETITIONS TO BE HEARD**

### **5.1 Petition regarding Keep Antill Road vehicle filter submitted by Amanda Franco and others**

We the undersigned, Residents of Antill Road E3 and surrounding streets, welcome the imposition of the traffic gate which has been a great success by

- (i) dramatically reducing the vehicle traffic rat running down our street
- (ii) reducing pollution resulting in much cleaner air
- (iii) making walking, scooting and cycling safer and more welcoming
- (iv) making it is safer for children to cross the road

We urge the Mayor and his administration to respect our wishes and keep the traffic gate in place.

### **5.2 Petition regarding Silvertown Tunnel submitted by Dr Jackie Applebee submitted by and others**

We are residents of Tower Hamlets with grave concerns about climate change and as such are against the related issue of the construction of the Silvertown Tunnel. You may remember that a group of Tower Hamlets GPs wrote to you during the recent local election campaign to ask you to join with them to oppose the Silvertown Tunnel. They set out their major concerns regarding the negative impacts that the tunnel would have on the health of the people living nearby due to the increase in air pollution. They also pointed out that the building process will have a huge carbon footprint and as new roads ultimately always lead to an increase in traffic, the tunnel will increase carbon emissions when the world is on course for catastrophic climate change unless radical action is taken to reduce such emissions.

The GPs didn't hear from you but we are hoping that you will respond to this letter which is signed by a much wider group of Tower Hamlets residents.

One of the arguments used to support the building of the tunnel is that something must be done to relieve congestion at the Blackwall Tunnel however all the evidence shows that any reduction in traffic volume will only be temporary.

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/building-new-roads-just-creates-more-traffic-heres-the-proof/>

Another argument used is that as cars transition to electricity emissions will go

down. However the fuel used to generate this electricity is, at present, overwhelmingly provided by fossil fuels meaning that CO2 emissions are not reduced but just shifted elsewhere. Global warming doesn't distinguish from where the emissions come, the planet just warms up! There is a large carbon footprint to manufacturing cars and air pollution is not only caused by exhaust emissions but by car use in general, for example by the production of fine particles of break dust. We need less cars on the road not more!

Far better would be to invest the money spent on the Silvertown Tunnel into much cheaper and more reliable public transport, active forms of travel and safer streets. This would have multiple benefits to the health of the residents of Tower Hamlets. Improved confidence to walk and cycle if the streets were safer with respect to motor vehicles would not only reduce pollution but improve health. Affordable public transport (at present the tube in particular is prohibitively expensive for some Tower Hamlets residents ) would encourage people to leave their cars at home. A walk to the bus stop is further than a walk to a parked car so also helping fitness.

It has been argued that a charge to use the Silvertown Tunnel would limit traffic and that the tolls collected could be used to mitigate the damaging effects of the tunnel. However two separate sets of legal advice obtained by Greenwich Council and by the Stop the Silvertown Tunnel Coalition state clearly that future Mayors have no more obligation to charge to use Blackwall and Silvertown than they do any other London road.

Greenwich council have recently joined Newham, Hackney and Lewisham in opposing the construction of the tunnel.


<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/mar/17/greenwich-fourth-london-council-oppose-silvertown-tunnel>

We urge you to put the health of Tower Hamlets residents first, to be bold and to begin to take meaningful action against climate change and to join these four councils and oppose the Silvertown Tunnel.

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# Agenda Item 7

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>COUNCIL</b>  27 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Motion for debate submitted by the Administration</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one specific Motion submitted by the Administration. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. The Administration Motion is submitted by the Aspire Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

## MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

## **7 – ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE – REGARDING ADOPTION OF THE ASPIRE MANIFESTO**

Proposed by Cllr Maium Miah Talukdar  
Seconded by Cllr Jahed Choudhury

This Council notes:

- The mandate given to Mayor Lutfur Rahman and the Aspire Group of Tower Hamlets to implement their manifesto.
- That this manifesto will radically restructure the balance of economic and social power in the Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- That the Mayor and the Aspire Party will aim to implement most – if not all – of the policies and pledges by the end of the current Mayoral term.


This Council believes:

- That the Aspire manifesto should serve as the basis of the Council's policy platform for the coming term.
- That this manifesto will enable the Mayor and his Council to:
  - Tackle the cost of living crisis
  - Build green, affordable and sustainable homes for the future
  - Accelerate and develop lifelong, educational opportunities in the borough
  - Make Tower Hamlets a hub of culture, business, jobs and leisure
  - Invest in public services
  - Empower the communities of Tower Hamlets, fight crime and make the Borough's streets a safe place to live.
  - Provide a cleaner, greener future for all residents.
  - Give residents a Council that listens to their needs, concerns and ideas

This council resolves:

- That this Manifesto should be incorporated into the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' official policy platform and programme for the full duration of this Mayoral term

# Agenda Item 8

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>COUNCIL</b>  27 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Motion for debate submitted by an Opposition Group</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one Motion submitted by an Opposition Group. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, submission of the Opposition Motion for Debate will alternate in sequence between the opposition groups. This Opposition Motion is submitted by the Labour Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

## MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

## **8 – OPPOSITION MOTION FOR DEBATE - EMERGENCY BUDGET TO TACKLE THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS**

Proposer: Councillor Marc Francis

Seconder: Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

### **This Council notes:**

- The steep increases in the costs of energy and food since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022 and the impact this is already having on Tower Hamlets' poorest residents;
- Councillors agreed a £200,000 increase in the Residents Support Scheme (Local Welfare Assistance) in the 2022/23 Budget meeting in March specifically to help residents struggling with their energy bills;
- Councillors also agreed an additional £370,000 in the same Full Council meeting for the continuation of the Food Distribution Hub in 2022/23;
- The Mayor agreed a Cost of Living package at Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

### **This Council believes:**


- This cost of living crisis demands an urgent response from both central, regional and local government if we are to prevent even worse levels of poverty and destitution;
- The Chancellor's statement on 26<sup>th</sup> May only goes a small way in easing the cost of living crisis, especially for those on the lowest incomes;
- Tower Hamlets Council is now set to receive income significantly higher than originally anticipated in February 2021 and even March 2022 and that while some of this is due to be allocated, enough remains to give some scope for further measures to support Tower Hamlets' poorest residents over the next two years.

### **This Council therefore resolves:**

- To call on the Mayor of Tower Hamlets to bring forward a full Emergency Budget, including the following measures specifically designed to ease the financial burden on our poorest residents over the years 2022/23 and 2023/24:
  - To increase the "Standard Utilities Allowance" used in the calculation of Homecare charges from £5 a week back to £15 a week as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 (estimated cost – £250,000);
  - To allocate a sum of £500,000 to top-up the Discretionary Housing Payment funding pot to the same level as 2021/22, so LBTH can help more tenants affected by the Tory Government's "Bedroom Tax", Benefit Cap and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) "freeze" on their Housing Benefit / Universal Credit entitlement;
  - To allocate a £500,000 Council Tax "Hardship Fund" for residents struggling with these bills, including self-employed residents affected by the use of DWP's Minimum Income Floor in calculating their entitlement to Council Tax Support and disabled residents whose Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is included as "income";

- Set aside a total sum of £100,000 to award one-off grants to the voluntary food-banks operating in Tower Hamlets in 2022/23 so that they are better able to ensure no-one goes hungry in the East End this year;
- Add a further one-off top up of £200,000 to LBTH's own Residents Support Scheme pot to help those who are unable to afford essential white goods, utility bills or who are in difficulty with priority debts;
- Allocate an additional sum of £150,000 to the School Uniform Grant funding to enable an increase in the £110 allowance per child agreed in 2019/20 and a second payment to be made for each eligible child, for example when starting Primary School;
- Fully utilise the expected £1.75 million allocated from the Department for Education's Holiday Activity & Food Programme (HAFP) in 2022/23 and aside an additional sum of £250,000 to cover the removal of contingency funding so as to ensure every child in receipt of free school meals has access to a nourishing lunchtime meal throughout the summer holidays;
- Explore options for the immediate extension of Free School Meals from September 2022 onwards to the parents of secondary school children where they are in receipt of Universal Credit, but currently have a household income of more than £7,400.

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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>Council</b></p> <p>27 July 2022</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Sharon Godman Director of Strategy, Improvement and Transformation</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22</b></p>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Afazul Hoque, Head of Corporate Strategy and Communities
<b>Wards affected</b>	Wards

## Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the work that Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), its sub-committees and scrutiny leads delivered in 2021-22 municipal year

## Recommendations:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Note the attached Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2021-22

### 1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The council's constitution requires that the OSC must report annually to the council on its work.

### 2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the council's constitution requires OSC to report annually to Full Council on its work

### 3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The council's constitution requires that OSC must report annually to Full Council, evidencing the committees activities during the past year and include the work of its sub-committees.
- 3.2 The appended report (appendix 1) provides a summary of the different activities and work that scrutiny carried out last municipal year. It includes the

oversight on the council's budget with recommendations, strategic delivery performance and budget monitoring (regular agenda items on scrutiny work programme). The Committee held spotlights on Liveable Streets Programme, Waste Services, Digital Inclusion Strategy, Cabinet Member spotlight on Housing, Community Safety spotlight with the Borough Commander.

- 3.3 The Committee also received regular monthly updates on COVID-19 from Public Health which provided context for some of the scrutiny issues that Members considered. The OSC also held two challenge sessions scrutinising swimming provision in the borough and the behaviour change challenge with the council's parking permit policy. Both of which made recommendations for the executive considerations.
- 3.4 The OSC also held a Mayor's spotlight and challenged the poor waste and recycling collection performance and lack of accountability of signatories to the Tower Hamlets Housing Covenant.
- 3.5 The work of OSC is divided into different scrutiny activities and this includes scrutiny review and challenge sessions, call-ins spotlights sessions focussing on council and partner services.

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Reducing inequalities, promoting cohesion and building community leadership are key to the work of the OSC and its sub-committees. A number of reviews and challenges session incorporate the equality consideration such as closure of swimming pools impact on child obesity, pregnant women, people with disabilities. Also the impact on change for different groups public space users when it comes to parking provision.

#### **5. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 5.1. There are no direct financial implications from this annual report

#### **6. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 6.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules set out at Paragraph 30 of Part B of the Council's Constitution provide that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to Full Council on its work. This report complies with that requirement.

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### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- NONE



## **Appendices**

- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22

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

#### **List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

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

- None

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Afazul Hoque

[afazul.hoque@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:afazul.hoque@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Ext 4636

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# TOWER HAMLETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

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## CHAIR'S FOREWORD

I'm delighted to introduce this report which provides a summary of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's (OSC) activity in 2021-22.

This year, I aimed to ensure a collaborative approach to scrutiny across all our committees which captured residents' concerns and had a tangible impact on service delivery. I wanted our committees to make proactive recommendations and shine a light on the impact that policy decisions, service reductions and budget cuts are having on our residents. To support this, I released several videos to promote upcoming meetings and invited residents to submit their questions which the committee would then raise during our discussions. I'd like to thank all residents for their valuable contributions throughout the year and encourage you to continue to engage with the committee in the year ahead.

As the borough progressed in its recovery from COVID-19 and faced new challenges presented from the Omicron variant, I asked each committee to include at least one COVID-19 recovery item in its work programme. OSC also received monthly written updates from the Director of Public Health, and we held a spotlight session with the Cabinet Lead for Adults Health and Wellbeing and Corporate Director for Health Adults and Community to discuss challenges and the council's priorities moving forward as we plan to 'live with Covid'.

I also wanted to ensure greater executive accountability through our work programme. Therefore, OSC held a number of Cabinet Member spotlights and/or spotlights on a particular area within Members portfolio, with each Cabinet Member invited on at least once occasion. This helped to facilitate a broad range of discussions on key policy areas such as housing, youth services, liveable streets, digital exclusion, waste services, community safety, and workforce diversity.

Budget scrutiny remained a priority for OSC as we aimed alleviate some of the hardship many of our residents are facing as we progress in our recovery from the pandemic and are challenged by a cost-of-living crisis. The committee made several recommendations to Cabinet to ensure it sets a budget which truly protects services, supports our most vulnerable, helps residents with the increased cost of living and invests to unlock opportunity for all.

This report marks the end of another four years scrutinising the administration of Tower Hamlets Council. During that time, the work of OSC and its three Sub-Committees (Health & Adults, Housing & Regeneration, and Children & Education) has been extensive as we have investigated and reviewed some of the biggest issues facing the Council and residents. From the challenge of the Council's budget to the impact of Brexit, COVID-19, Liveable Streets, Waste Services, Youth Services, community safety and children's improvement programme. Looking beyond the upcoming election, I'd ask the next administration, and the council's corporate leadership, to recognise the value of the scrutiny function, and ensure it is prioritised to be a key part of the council's governance, policy development and decision making.

I would like to thank the committee Members, officers and partners who have contributed and supported scrutiny during the year. I hope this report helps you to understand the work and value of scrutiny and that it enthruses you to get involved.

**Cllr Mohammed Pappu,**

**Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

## MEMBERSHIP

### Membership - Scrutiny Committees

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the principal Member-led body that holds the executive to account and provides a critical friend challenge to a wide range of issues of strategic importance. To support this the scrutiny arrangements in Tower Hamlets includes a main Overview and Scrutiny Committee, three sub-committees and two scrutiny leads covering portfolio areas. These include:

Committee	Role
<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)</b> You can view the agenda, reports and minutes of this committee by clicking on the link: <a href="#">Tower Hamlets Council - Browse meetings - Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</a>	
Councillor Mohammed Pappu	Chair
Councillor Bex White	Vice Chair and Scrutiny Chair for Children and Education Sub-Committee
Councillor Gabriela Salva- Macallan	Scrutiny Chair for Health and Adults Sub-Committee
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	Scrutiny Chair for Housing and Regeneration Sub-Committee
Councillor Leema Qureshi	Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	Scrutiny Lead Environment and Community Safety
Councillor Marc Francis	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Denise Jones	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Andrew Wood	Scrutiny Member
Halima Islam	Co-opted Member
James Wilson	Co-opted Member
<b>Health &amp; Adults Sub-Committee (HASSC)</b> HASSC's terms of reference can be found here: <a href="#">Health &amp; Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee Terms of Reference</a>	
Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan	Chair
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Shah Ameen	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Denise Jones	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Puru Miah	Scrutiny Member

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David Burbidge	Co-opted Member
Sue Kenten	Co-opted Member
<b>Children &amp; Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee (CESSC)</b> You can view the agenda, reports and minutes of this committee by clicking on the link: <a href="#">Tower Hamlets Council - Committee details - Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee</a>	
Councillor Bex White	Chair
Councillor Shad Chowdhury	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Helal Uddin	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Andrew Wood	Scrutiny Member
Abena Adeji	Co-opted Member
Joanna Hannan	Co-opted Member
Dr Phillip Rice	Vice Chair & Co-opted Member
Ashraf Zaman	Co-opted Member
<b>Housing &amp; Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HRSSC)</b> You can view the agenda, reports and minutes of this committee by clicking on the link: <a href="#">Tower Hamlets Council - Committee details - Housing &amp; Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee</a>	
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	Chair
Councillor Marc Francis	Vice Chair
Councillor Amina Ali	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Victoria Obaze	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Helal Uddin	Scrutiny Member
Councillor Andrew Wood	Scrutiny Member
Anne Ambrose	Co-opted Member
Moshin Hamim	Co-opted Member



# OSC Annual Report 2021-22

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### Scrutiny Work Programme

The 2021-22 [Scrutiny Work Programme](#) focused on the council's strategic priorities, residents' concerns and key policy issues. Meetings of the Committee are public and you can view recordings of all meetings online: [click to access video recordings](#).

### Swimming Provision

In September 2021, the Committee held a [review to consider current and future swimming provision in the borough](#) and found that current provision requires significant investment and refurbishment. The current reduction in provision is having a significant impact on access for residents, schools and other sports groups. It was noted capacity will increase in early 2022 following completion of refurbishment work on two centres.

The Committee made seven recommendations which focussed on improving access and developing and maintaining leisure centres which meet the needs of the borough's growing population. A long-term capital investment strategy must be developed to ensure they are maintained to a high standard. As part of the session, the Committee asked to be engaged in the consultation on leisure facilities which considered future need. Cabinet agreed a response to the scrutiny recommendations and the associated action plan can be found [here](#).

### Digital Inclusion Strategy

In September 2021, the Committee reviewed the council's proposal for the new [Digital Inclusion Strategy](#) and helped to shape the strategy and action plan. The Committee considered the approach to developing the strategy, insights on the key barriers that residents face, use of resources and levels of engagement with stakeholders.

The Committee was pleased to hear that such a comprehensive body of work has been undertaken to form this plan, with several partners engaged to help drive implementation across the borough and research commissioned to help understand the nuances of our local need.

The Committee noted that whilst there are several encouraging actions in place to support residents to be digitally included and increase residents' access, we must not lose sight of the fact that there a number of people who do not want, or are not able to, use digital services. The Committee recommended that the council make it easier to use the council's website to access services and look to develop a user friendly, plain English digital platform as advocated in the Poverty Review.

### Liveable Streets Programme

In October 2021, the Committee reviewed the progress of the [Liveable Streets Programme](#). It was a very productive discussion, and the Committee welcomed further engagement on the programme as it enters a period of review to consider how to amend the programme to best meet the needs of all our residents.

## OSC Annual Report 2021-22

The Committee welcomed the level of resident engagement on this topic and received an open letter from residents (217 signatures) highlighting their concerns regarding the Liveable Streets Programme.

The Committee recommended the council to really listen and respond to what our residents are telling us and this needs to be an iterative process given the nature of this programme and the wider perception of what other boroughs are doing. The council must ensure that as it moves through each stage of the programme, it is taking our residents with us and guiding them through what are transformative changes to their habits and behaviours.

The Committee recognises that getting the balance right is always going to be challenging but keeping our residents and other stakeholders informed in a timely manner will be critical to the delivering the programme successfully.

It's clear to the Committee that the council must move swiftly to find a resolution to address the concerns our residents have raised, and this programme has become very polarising and damaging for our community. [To this end, the Committee submitted several recommendations to help tackle and progress some of the key issues emerging from the programme.](#)

### Waste Services

In November 2021, OSC held a spotlight on [Waste Services](#). The Committee reviewed waste and recycling performance since the service came back in-house and considered the service response to complaints around fly tipping, contamination and missed collections. The Committee also questioned the on-going issue around adapted vehicles for collection that have broken down frequently and contamination of waste and illegal dumping of waste.

The Committee made several recommendations to improve the performance of the service, including improving communication on issues of contamination to help increase residents' confidence and behaviour. The Committee also recommended that the council invests in more collection vehicles to increase service resilience and capacity, improve and expand enforcement procedures, improve communications around recycling champions, and raise awareness that small electrical items can be disposed at Ideas Stores

### Housing

In December 2021, the Committee scrutinised the delivering of the borough's housing priorities. The discussion focused on the number of housing projects delivered and planned work including key housing challenges and the update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Committee was pleased to hear about the progress made with house building and welcomed the volume of buyback on right to buy properties to house homeless households and mitigate the financial pressures arising from the increased costs.

The Committee raised concerns on the deterioration in the quality of service being offered by some registered housing providers such as disrepairs and anti-social

## OSC Annual Report 2021-22

behaviour. The Committee also heard on some of the continuing challenges of rising rent, poverty, and the impact of Brexit on cost of labour, skills and materials.

The Committee scrutinised the lack of accountability of signatories to the Tower Hamlets Housing Covenant that sets out a commitment by the borough on providing:

- quality and value for money housing services;
- shared commitment to Tower Hamlets residents; and
- maximise the supply of affordable housing and housing options.

The committee wrote to the Mayor and Cabinet Member requesting assurance on holding all the signatories to account and outlined actions to be taken for failure.

### Mayor's Spotlight

In February 2022, the Committee held a spotlight with Mayor John Biggs and focussed on his achievements, some of the key challenges and priorities for the future. The Committee heard how priorities had been affected by COVID-19, budget challenges and the demand for statutory services. The Committee also noted challenges such as meeting housing targets, issues with street cleansing, and behaviour change.

The Committee sought clarity on the council's approach to address the demand for large four-to-five-bedroom properties, continuing issues with the refuse and recycling performance, and council's strategy on return to office post COVID-19.

### Strategic Delivery Performance Reporting and Budget Monitoring

Each year OSC reviews the council's strategic performance and management of the council's budget on a quarterly basis. OSC scrutinises the Strategic Delivery Performance Reporting which is set against the council's [Strategic Plan](#) – outlining key priorities and outcomes to be achieve. Each municipal year in January, the council sets its [budget](#) through its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and as a 'critical friend' to the council, OSC undertakes a quarterly check and challenge approach to monitor the budget, holding the executive to account to ensure that forecasted spends and savings set out in the budget are being delivered whilst scrutinising the rationale for any budget challenges.

## OSC Annual Report 2021-22

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all of those who took time to contribute to the work of scrutiny this year and all those who provide health and wellbeing support to the residents of Tower Hamlets.

The committee has aimed to have a proactive approach to driving service improvement, rather than being reactive in response to decisions of the council executive, NHS and health partners. The committee has been mindful of the impact of the pandemic upon residents, services and staff. During the peak of the pandemic, the committee was keen to ensure the health service, adult social care and other stakeholders including community and voluntary sector in Tower Hamlets were able to respond to the needs of the community particularly those who are vulnerable.

The role of the sub-committee this year has been to focus on the impact of covid 19 and apply the learning to support the ongoing work to restore health and care provision in Tower Hamlets. The committee started the year with a review of COVID-19 and looked at specific areas related to COVID-19 recovery as part of the workplan, such as COVID-19 Mental Health Services and Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).

The NHS landscape is rapidly transforming with changes to the NHS and transformation to an Integrated Care System and new function of Tower Hamlets Together. The committee has spent some time over the past 18 months looking at this development and its anticipated implications to the health and care infrastructure and governance locally. As I look ahead towards future challenges and role of this committee, such a change will inevitably have a substantial impact on our role. I hope that scrutiny finds a place within the new structure so that it can fully perform its functions.

***Cllr Gabriella Salva Macallan, Chair of Health and adults Scrutiny sub-committee***

## HEALTH & ADULTS

### Protecting older people in care homes

Health and Adults scrutiny sub-committee has considered a report on older people's care homes specifically looking at the support residents of care homes and its staff received during the pandemic.

The committee investigated the multi-disciplinary team and public health input that went in to care homes during the pandemic to support 215 residents in these settings. The committee was particularly interested to ensure the right levels of prevention and management of outbreaks are in place to properly protect the residents of care homes and its staff.

The committee heard from staff/management of a care home to better understand the care homes perspective e.g. of what was working well, what are the challenges, what is the focus over the coming months etc. The committee noted the substantial loss of lives during the pandemic, and felt it was important to hear from families of

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residents of care homes to better understand the lived experiences of residents of care homes and their families.

The committee recommended that commissioners and partners continue to engage with care homes, residents' families and other stakeholders to identify long term recommendations for

### Vaccination programme

GP Care Group was also invited to meetings to advise on their vaccination programme and how it was working with partners to roll out vaccines in care homes and more widely across the borough. The committee was interested to understand the low uptake of vaccines amongst certain groups of the community including care home staff and how the issue of general hesitancy was being addressed collaboratively with stakeholders including the community and across the wider North-East London landscape.

### Support for asylum seekers

In December 2020, as part of Operation Oak, 443 asylum seekers were placed in 3 hostels in Tower Hamlets without prior notification affecting the Council's ability to work with relevant departments and partners to support this groups of people and their families. Tower Hamlets has assigned a coordinator to work across departments to ensure statutory obligations are being met.

The committee was particularly interested to understand how asylum seekers were supported into accommodation and integrated into society as well as assessing whether appropriate safeguarding measures are put in place during the pandemic.

The sub-committee recommended that support for young people not in school is explored further such as how service users with no recourse to public funds may be able to access support under Care Act & Human Rights Act, support with additional food supplies, household cleaning and hygiene items both at food banks and with deliveries as well as creating more opportunities for these young people.

### Restoring elective care and outpatient services in Royal London Hospital

Since April 2021, we have been informed that Barts Health is speedily restoring patient services that were put on hold during the pandemic. This includes working closely with system partners across north-east London and the independent sector to restore levels of service and reduce waiting times in elective surgery, outpatients and other services.

Barts Health will continue to prioritise patients by the urgency of treatment they require, and the average wait for those needing urgent surgery has reduced significantly. They are monitoring activity to ensure that services are restored equitably, whilst balancing the need for staff rest and recovery.

During the pandemic, patient and families experience of services have highlighted poor communication from health professionals and lack of cultural awareness affecting the treatment of patients during that time. The committee is keen to see



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health partners work with Healthwatch and patient groups to inform service provision going forward.

### Impact of covid 19 pandemic on Mental Health

People's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in some experiencing mental illness. The pandemic has impacted on the full spectrum of mental health and wellbeing including increased stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, grief and PTSD.

Wider determinants of mental health have been negatively impacted by the pandemic – employment, social contact, education. This has likely been further exacerbated in Tower Hamlets due to overcrowding levels and lack of outside space.

The pandemic's impact on population mental health presents a challenge for widening existing inequalities in our society and the specific vulnerabilities of certain groups and demographics will need to be a key area of focus going forward e.g. Grief & PTSD may be more prevalent in groups most directly impacted by the pandemic: older people, those in care homes, people with a disability, BAME communities and frontline health & care staff.

### Food poverty

Tower Hamlets Food Partnership (THFP) was established in 2018 by the Council. It was a recommendation from the Food Poverty JSNA 'to bring stakeholders together regularly to co-create solutions, develop action groups on priority areas and identify a way for the partnership to be sustainable'.

The sub-committee has been working closely with the Public Health, Council officers and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion to embed a number of recommendations that will support culture change including how people interact with food and nutrition as well as how we better utilise assets such as community kitchens to support communities prepare hot meals especially during a crisis.

### Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (INEL JHOSC)

Councillor Shah Ameen, Councillor Faroque Ahmed and Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan have represented the Sub-Committee on the INEL JHOSC which scrutinises NHS matters affecting the Inner North East London area. The work of the INEL JHOSC was also impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with responses to the pandemic scrutinised along with progress with vaccination roll-out across the footprint.

Children and young people will feel the effects of the pandemic for many years to come. Whether due to the extended periods when they were not able to physically attend school, because their financial situations deteriorated or the isolation and lack of social contact that they endured. It has been my intention therefore throughout the pandemic to highlight the impact that Covid 19 has had on children, young people and their families and shine a spotlight on the incredible work that those who support them have undertaken as well as the challenges that they have faced.

In the past year, we have placed the voices of children and young people at the centre of our work programme, endeavouring to hear from them at each meeting. We have also been able to hear from council staff and partners who have worked throughout this most difficult of times to ensure that the impacts of Covid 19 have been mitigated. I would like to thank the elected and co-opted members for the diligence and rigour in which they have undertaken their duties

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of those who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to support children and families.

***Cllr Bex White, Chair of Children and Education Sub Committee***

### CHILDRENS & EDUCATION

Each meeting of the sub-committee had a focus on a different area of the pandemic response. The committee was fortunate to be addressed by council staff, partners and particularly young people themselves to outline their experiences and how we can all work together to improve outcomes.

#### June 2021

- The theme of the Covid 19 update was in respect to how our Parks staff have managed throughout the pandemic. The committee heard how due to the demographics and housing situation in the borough, parks provide vital outside space to many who do not have access in their own homes. During the height of lockdown and particularly when the decision was taken to close Victoria Park, staff faced a lot of public anger as well as having to enforce an ever-changing raft of guidelines.
- The committee also heard from the newly appointed Director of Education about his early impressions and his priorities for the coming year.
- The final item was a spotlight on the Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation strategy and how this was being used to address serious issues of criminal and sexual exploitation. The committee heard from the Head of the Exploitation and the Metropolitan Police about their approach to tackling these very serious issues

#### September 21

- The theme of the Covid-19 update was mental health and emotional wellbeing. The committee heard three powerful presentations from young

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people linked to Spotlight Youth Service about how the pandemic had impacted on children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. These young people articulated the quite significant impacts and where they had been able to seek support. It was clear that while there is provision out there, it is not always well known and that there is more to be done to ensure that this support is accessible. Dr Helen Jones, who leads on the Health Spot Service and is the GP Lead for Mental Health, also spoke to the committee on how the points raised by the young people resonated strongly with her professional experience.

- The committee also heard a brief update on the recent SEND Inspection which took place in July 2021. As the final outcome had not been confirmed at that point, it was not possible to discuss in detail, however a deep dive session was scheduled for later in the year.
- The final outcome was a presentation by the TH Safeguarding Children's Partnership including their annual report. The committee heard from James Thomas, Director of Children and Culture as the representative of the three statutory partners (local authority, clinical commissioning group and Metropolitan Police). He explained the work of the partnership, and how it differed from the previous LSCB.
- The committee also heard from the Independent Scrutineer. He explained his role and said he is the 'critical friend' to the partnership. He said the Partnership's handling of the covid-19 pandemic had led to fortnightly meetings to pick up on immediate issues and he was impressed with the responsiveness of the partnership.

### October 21

- The Sub-Committee received a verbal update on the continued impact Covid-19 was having on secondary school education, in particular on older young people who had missed exams due to the lockdown. The committee heard from a secondary headteacher and a Year 12 student about how they had addressed the concerns related to the cancellation of exams and how they were preparing for these to be reinstated.
- The committee receive a presentation on the financial position of the council services for children and where there were particular budget pressures. These included the High Needs Funding Block for children with SEND as well as pressures of school budgets. The committee heard how these were being addressed and where expected future pressures were likely to arise.
- The final item was a presentation on "School Streets". The committee were grateful to hear from the lead member Cllr Kahar Chowdhury and the team responsible for the programme to better understand how the scheme has been implemented. The primary aims were to reduce congestion at drop off and pick up times and introduce safer walking and cycling as well as reduce pollution. As with any programmes of this nature, there are often opposing views, but the team explained their consultation and engagement processes and how they sought to address affected residents concerns.



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- The committee also received a brief update following the publication of the SEND Inspection outcome and the requirement for the local authority to produce a Written Statement of Action.

### December 21

- The committee had an update on Children's Social Care including a focus on the impact of the pandemic. It was great to hear from a number of front-line practitioners about how they have been supporting children and families throughout the pandemic and how it continues to impact on their work.
- The committee heard from the Acting Director for Supporting Families about the directorate as a whole and how staff were managing the current situation.
- The Corporate Director for Children and Culture, James Thomas commented on the shocking and distressing murder of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, in Solihull, which had received much coverage and reaction. Mr Thomas said a reasonable question to ask would be if something as shocking could happen here in Tower Hamlets. He said there could never be a guarantee that children will not be abused however, the extreme levels of abuse in Arthur's case are rare. Mr Thomas cited Professor Eileen Munro's report saying all leaders must work to reduce harm and risk, but child abuse could not be eliminated. He said for this reason harm to children remained a top corporate risk and various mitigations were in place to combat this, including the Local Safeguarding Partnership, whose role is to externally quality assure the systems in place.
- Finally, the committee consider a presentation in respect to support for children we care and those who are leaving our care. As part of this the committee heard from two care leavers about the work of Children Living in Care Council and how they have been supported in their transition to adulthood.

Throughout this extraordinary time, the focus of the services within the Housing and Regeneration portfolio has been to support our residents given the exceptional circumstances and economic and social uncertainties that they have faced. Consequently, as chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee, my attention has been invested in ensuring that residents have whatever additional support they have needed during this time while ensuring that the council and its partners maintain the provision our existing services throughout the pandemic.

In this respect, the decision to examine the performance of social housing landlords at every one of our meetings has been vindicated. We invited a different partner housing provider to appear at every meeting and we raised issues of performance and delivery with them, based on what their residents told us as councillors. More widely, over the last year, we have continued our focus on two specific areas: the quality of the housing options service and the important issue of fire and building safety.

The Housing Options Service has worked hard to ensure that those who needed support as a result of the pandemic have had the help and assistance that they have needed. Key achievements included the successful delivery of the *Everyone In* initiative and ongoing delivery of improvements to the customer journey.

Along with THHF partners, the council is working with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) on how best to engage with residents on fire safety issues and are in discussion with the LFB on producing a fire safety video and creating a Tower Hamlets Fire Safety Forum – which may include managing agents and leaseholder representatives as part of the engagement process.

***Cllr Ehtasham Haque, Chair of Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee***

## HOUSING & REGENERATION

### June 2021

We agreed the work programme for the year and considered a presentation on the Planning Bill white Paper along with the implications, key issues and the preparedness of the council of the forthcoming changes.

At this meeting we also held a “listening session” with residents with the aim of undertaking a more in-depth analysis of fire safety issues over the summer, following a fire in a flat in a tower block at New Providence Wharf.

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## September 2021

We recommenced our regular slot of examining the performance of social landlords operating in the borough at this meeting. We heard directly from a group of residents from one local housing provider about the lack of services they were receiving and agreed to ask the organisation to attend our meeting in October to respond to their residents' allegations.

We also reviewed the findings of audit report into housing allocations and the council's response and considered the work in developing an intermediate housing register of interest.

Our focus was on the findings of the "deep-dive" into fire safety practices across the borough and what lessons can be learned including what the council can do to improve or mitigate fire safety risks. The outcome of this was that we agreed to recommend to the Mayor in Cabinet a wide-ranging set of proposals to improve fire and building safety across the borough.

## October 2021

The chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum provided an update on work of the THHF benchmarking group in response to the sub committee's previous comments and observations on the way performance data is presented.

We heard from the Director of Growth and Integration on improving employment outcomes for residents with a focus on partnership working opportunities. We discussed apprenticeship opportunities and raised awareness of smaller projects and providers across the borough that have helped residents obtain work.

We considered the benefits and outcomes of the council's regeneration work focussing on the impact of council's recent approach to regeneration. We recommended that this important work should be considered again and involve wider representation from across the council, its partners and other local authorities.

## December 2021

We heard from Peabody HA on their performance in delivering housing services to residents across the borough and had a personal representation from the chair of a resident's association about their experience of a recent decanting exercise. The outcome of this was that we agreed to write to the association and express our concern

We closed the loop on an earlier examination (last year) of our allocations policy by reviewing the implementation and impact of the recent change in allocations policy regarding use of the private rented sector.

We received a presentation on the consultation exercise with council tenants to modernise out tenancy agreement which has not been changed since its introduction in 1999. We expressed concern over the low response rate to the consultation exercise.

## ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The pandemic highlighted significant inequalities in the borough compounded by community tensions and antisocial behaviour. Women and girls' safety is at the forefront of the committee's attention and the committee has ensured a robust challenge and engagement with the authorities that are there to protect them has taken place.

As we move to recovery, I have focussed my scrutiny attention on how the council can contribute to improving the environment. Both parking pressures and a growing population brings its own challenges. This year, I have focussed on scrutinising the factors that impact parking pressures and road traffic management in the borough and how the council's parking permit policy can better serve the use public space. I welcome this report in highlighting some of the key work undertaken on the environment and community safety portfolio.

***Cllr Faroque Ahmed, Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety***

### Community Safety Spotlight

In February 2022, OSC focussed on [community safety](#) and invited the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and the Borough Commander to review and consider the achievements, challenges and the local policing priorities for 2022-23.

The Borough Commander outlined his priorities for the Borough Commander Unit (BCU) this year and included street and youth-based violence, violence and against women and girls (VAWG), drugs and antisocial behaviour, burglary, public protection, building trust and confidence and better engagement and strengthening partnerships.

The Borough Commander also outlined some of their achievements from the crime and detection figures including issues such as anti-social behaviour, use of stop and search powers and highlighted their success on addressing local drug dealing through the 'Operation Continuum' strategy.

OSC raised a number of key resident concerns with the borough commander and this included the wider reported police behaviour and culture, safety of women and

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girls with the night time economy and use of public transport, safety measures to improve town centre public spaces after dark, the treatment of sexual offences when they are reported and number of convictions, charges against those with dangerous weapons and types of cross borough partnership work used to tackle serious youth violence and county lines.

The committee also sought clarity on the reduction of prolonged abstraction of dedicated ward officers (DWO) to other policing activities and emphasised the impact this has on local neighbourhoods.

### Environment Challenge Session: The extent to which council's parking permit policy influences people's behaviour

In November 2021, OSC held a scrutiny challenge session to consider [the extent to which the council's parking permit policy influences people's behaviour](#). The committee wanted to better understand:

- how the council's current parking permit scheme influences people's behaviour on parking;
- likely impact on the scheme and parking in general because of more planned car free dwellings, expansion of London's ULEZ boundaries, residents' motivation to switch to electric vehicles; and
- learning from neighbouring authorities and experts as part of developing longer-term sustainable parking solutions.

The committee supports the council's ambition to reduce petrol and diesel vehicles to protect the environment and also understands that there is an immediate need to manage the current demand for parking and align this with future demand. The committee made the following recommendations to assist with this:

R1	<p>That the Parking and Mobility Service reviews the parking and permit policies to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) It embeds a documented approach such as a Parking Enforcement Plan for policies such as pricing, control parking zones, permit schemes to manage the highway and parking demand; and</li><li>(b) It should also detail how these relate to the other council priorities such as climate change, air quality and liveable street and school streets.</li></ul>
R2	<p>That the Parking and Mobility Service consider the following options to better utilise available parking space and incorporate health impact assessments alongside equality considerations to understand the impact they will have on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Reviewing business permit spaces where feasible and how multi-use bays can be better utilised to support the post pandemic economic recovery;</li><li>(b) Selective use of removal of individual space markings within bays (where there is a high footfall and demand for parking) to support capacity within a limited footprint; and</li><li>(c) Selective application for increasing the use of kerb parking where footways are unusually wide, increasing carriageway width and in some cases allowing the removal of yellow lines (where there is a high footfall and demand for parking) to support capacity within a limited footprint.</li></ul>
R3	<p>That the Parking and Mobility Service considers ensuring EV charging points</p>

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	have a maximum stay policy in place to facilitate capacity for others to charge.
R4	That the Parking and Mobility Service reviews the current Permit Transfer Scheme and should include assessing flexibility for residents who may need a short break from vehicle ownership without it impacting their right of accessing the permit when they choose to purchase the vehicle.
R5	That the Parking and Mobility Services uses a targeted approach via CEO monitoring activities to address hotspot areas and co-ordinate with ASB and Enforcement officers to use sanctions where necessary such as ASB orders and temporary use CCTVs to act as deterrence, meet compliance and incentivise behaviour change.
R6	That the Parking and Mobility Services considers the option of setting its emission-based pricing policy over a longer period (for example three years) to help influence buyer behaviour and make the change towards lower emission vehicles.
R7	Car clubs (EV's) as a single borough wide solution for the council, thus reducing further need for costly public service permits and encourage other large employer partners within the borough to sign up with the scheme such as home care providers.

## FINANCE & RESOURCES

As we work towards a recovery from the pandemic, it is important to keep focus now more than ever on how the council is managing its finances and resources. This is particularly important at a time when residents are experience a cost-of-living burden, rising energy prices and inflationary pressures and the challenges that this brings on inequality and poverty.

With the challenges on budget uncertainty and increase demand for statutory services, I have focussed on scrutinising the grants being approved to ensure that it offers good value for money and delivers on broader community and social benefits. At OSC, I have continued to review and scrutinise the use of resources and budgetary decisions to ensure the council is focussing and meeting resident's needs. I welcome this report which highlights some of the key work undertaken on finance and resources portfolio.

***Cllr Leema Qureshi, Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources***

### Grant Determination Sub-Committee

At Grant Determination Sub-Committee (GDSC), I lead on scrutinising the grants being approved by the GDSC to obtain assurances that its good value for money and delivers on wider community benefits. This included reviewing a variety of requests for grant funding such as awarding 50% grants up to £10,000 to SMEs who carry and out heat decarbonisation and renewable energy projects, application of the Community Infrastructure Levy to support London Square (New Town Hall), supporting organisations to deliver on the food pantry provision and scrutinising the



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use of Whitechapel Levelling Up Fund to enable Transport for London to make repairs to properties close to the rail lines.

### Council's Budget for 2022-23

In January 2022, OSC undertook a detailed review of the council's proposed budget for 2022-23. OSC felt that the budget assumptions were substantially underestimated resulting in a significant difference of money available and a £5.4 million surplus. OSC acknowledged that the council had exceptional consecutive challenges resulting from austerity, Brexit and COVID-19 pandemic, however OSC felt that a more robust 'in the round' budget proposal could have benefited council services that have or are being proposed to be cut.


OSC recognised that there were a number of areas for the budget that required improvement and recommended the following:

Medium Term Financial Strategy	
R1	Provide the committee with modelling of what impact changes to income in future years will have on the council's finances, providing insight of worst-case, medium case, and best-case scenario
R2	<p>a. Establish a funding approach that includes a refreshed Reserves' Policy – so that it does not operate in isolation and is integrated; attach confidence levels/levels of assurance against items and aspects projected to happen and reflect on past projections to learn from those things we have previously predicted/assumed that have not eventuated; and</p> <p>b. Review modelling for income projections and expenditure assumptions to ensure income growth is more accurately reflected</p>
R3	In light of the additional £5.4m, review previously agreed savings alongside the equalities impact assessment and identify where additional funding can be allocated. In particular savings which have or will have the greatest impact on access to frontline services and vulnerable people must be reviewed
R4	<p>That the council restructures its budget setting process so that it has a greater focus on delivering priorities and measuring impact.</p> <p>a. Conduct the Budget Consultation (which gauges public priorities) at the beginning of the municipal year; and</p> <p>b. That the council restructures its budget setting process so that it has a greater focus on delivering priorities and measuring outcomes</p>
Fees and Charges	
R5	Reduce the level of increase to market trader fees and charges which will have a significant impact on people's livelihood and ability to stay in employment i.e. charges impacting market traders at Watney market, Columbia Road, Whitechapel market, and Bethnal Green Road
R6	Review the fees and charges for hiring of venues such as community hubs, ideas store, Brady Centre to make them more affordable and accessible for local community organisations and groups
R7	Provide a link on the fees and charges for community based social care services and residential care services within the fees and charges report

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Additional Budget Meeting	
R8	Provide OSC with a briefing note setting out the position of the Waste Services Reorganisation and the Technology Enabled Care Saving
R9	Include a list of the previously agreed savings for 2022-23 in the budget papers presented to Full Council



Decision Report Cover Sheet:  <b>Council</b>  27 July 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Cover Report of:</b> Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services  <b>Main Report:</b> Janet Fasan, Director, Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Cover report of: Annual Report of the Standards Advisory Committee</b>	

<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards
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**Summary**

At its meeting on 21 June 2022, the Standards Advisory Committee considered their annual report to Council.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to forward the report to Council for review. The report is attached to this cover sheet.

Council is asked to review and note the report.

**Recommendations:**

The Council is recommended to:

1. Review and note the Annual Report of the Standards Advisory Committee.

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Non-Executive Report of the: <b>Standards Advisory Committee</b> 21 June 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Open (Unrestricted)
<b>Standards Advisory Committee Annual Report to Council</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Jill Bayley, Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	(All)

### Executive Summary

This report sets out the Committee's annual report to Council. The report covers the activities of the Committee over the last year as well as being an opportunity to highlight any relevant issues to Council.

The Committee are asked to consider the draft Annual Report and feedback on any last updates before the report is presented to Council in July 2022.

### Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the activities of the Standards Advisory Committee for the municipal year May 2021 – May 2022 as set out in the Annual Report of the Standards Advisory Committee attached as Appendix 1.

#### 1. **REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 It is considered best practice in many authorities for the full Council to receive an annual report in relation to the work of the Standards Advisory Committee and on issues around standards generally. The provision of an annual report of the Committee's business ensures the profile of ethical standards across the organisation and affords the opportunity to highlight areas of good practice and identify any requirements for improvement.

#### 2. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Advisory Committee could decide not to submit an annual report but this

course of action is not recommended.

### **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee is asked to consider the Annual Report attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The report contains an outline of the work and activities of the Standards Advisory Committee over the past year as well as highlighting any particular issues that Council should consider.
- 3.3 The Standards Advisory Committee is asked to note the list of topics for consideration over the next year and to advise whether any additional topics should be considered, and whether any of the topics should be given particular priority.

### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no immediate equalities implications arising out of this report.

### **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 Robust ethical governance arrangements help to ensure the proper, efficient and effective discharge of the Council's functions and contribute to compliance with the requirement to achieve best value.

### **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 This report is for noting purposes and there are no direct financial implications.

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority.
- 7.2 This report and its appendix evidence the work undertaken by the Council to fulfil this duty.
- 

### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- List any linked reports
- 
- State NONE if none.

#### **Appendices**

- List any appendices [if Exempt, Forward Plan entry MUST warn of that]
- State NONE if none.

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

#### **List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

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

- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report
- State NONE if none.

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Or state N/A

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**London Borough of Tower Hamlets**  
**Standards Advisory Committee - Annual Report to Council**  
**Year May 2021 to May 2022**

**Introduction**

1. This is the regular Annual Report of the Advisory Committee. It sets out the key issues dealt with by the Committee during the past municipal year and identifies the priorities for 2022/23.

**Membership**

2. During the municipal year 2021/22 the Committee comprised 5 elected members and 5 independent co-opted members. The Council's Constitution provides that an independent co-opted member be appointed Chair of the Committee.

**Elected Members:**

- Cllr. Rajib Ahmed
- Cllr. Mufeedah Bustin
- Cllr. Rabina Khan
- Cllr. James King
- Cllr. Abdal Ullah

**Independent Co-opted Members**

- John Pulford MBE (Chair)
- Fiona Browne (Vice Chair)
- Nafisa Adam (resigned May 2022)
- Mike Houston
- Denzil Johnson (resigned March 2022)

Recruitment will be taking place for these vacancies.

**Independent Persons**

3. The Council has appointed two statutory Independent Persons (IPs) under the Localism Act 2011. Ms Rachael Tiffen was appointed in June 2018 and her term of office expired on 16 January 2022. Ms Elizabeth Hall's term of office expired in September 2021 and a new IP, Amanda Orchard, has been appointed. Both Ms Tiffen and Ms Orchard were appointed as IP at Council on 19 January 2022. Ms Tiffen's second term of office and Ms Orchard's first term of office both started on 20 January 2022 and last until 20 January 2026.

4. The principal role of the IP is to give an independent view on governance issues in general and specifically in relation to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members. Both IP's work closely the Monitoring Officer and her Deputies, considering all complaints and whether an alleged breach of the Code meets the criteria for investigation.
5. It is also a statutory requirement to consult the IP before deciding on the outcome of an investigation into a complaint and whether to impose any sanction. The Member complained about may also at any stage of the process seek a view from the IP and in order to avoid any conflict of interest the Council has appointed two IPs.
6. The Council is fortunate to have appointed IPs with a sound understanding of the ethical framework who both act as advocates for the Council in promoting ethical standards and of high standards of conduct. Although not members of the Standards Advisory Committee, they attend meetings and play an important role in the proceedings. Both IPs also contribute to and participate in the Council's mandatory Ethics & Probity training programme. In this report I would like to acknowledge the continuing invaluable work and support of Rachael Tiffen, to thank Elizabeth Hall for her much-appreciated work and support during her 8.5 year period of office, and to welcome Amanda Orchard.

## **Officers**

7. The Committee's lead officers were:
  - Janet Fasan – Director, Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
  - Matthew Mannion – Head of Democratic Services
  - Agnes Adrien – Head of Litigation and Deputy Monitoring Officer (from June 2021)
  - Jill Bayley, Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer (from June 2021)
  - Mark Norman (former Legal Adviser and Deputy Monitoring Officer) retired in May 2021 and the Committee is grateful to him for his work over many years.

## **Terms of Reference**

8. The current terms of reference for the Standards Advisory Committee are contained in Part B Section 19 of the Constitution, with the Committee's procedures set out in Part D. The Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix A to this report, and the Procedures are attached as Appendix B.



## **Meetings**

9. The Standards Advisory Committee held four meetings during the 2022/22 municipal period on the following dates:
  - 1 July 2021
  - 30 September 2021
  - 25 November 2021
  - 10 February 2022
10. Due to the pandemic, the Committee met in hybrid format with a quorum meeting physically and other members attending virtually. This system worked well, allowing for flexibility and it is likely that the committee will continue in this way after the pandemic has ceased.

## **Standards Advisory Committee Work Programme 2021/22**

11. The Committee agreed a work programme at the first meeting of the municipal period on 1 July 2021. It was updated throughout the year. The key areas of business considered during the year are listed below.

## **Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring:**

12. The Committee received bi-annual monitoring reports on complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members. There were 11 complaints from May 2021 to May 2022.
13. All 11 complaints were made by members of the public and none by local councillors. Eight complaints were closed without investigation after consultation with the IP. Three complaints are currently subject to initial investigation by the MO and IP.
14. The Committee continues to monitor whether there are lessons to take from complaints monitoring. The Committee continues to monitor remedial actions and that outcomes are reported to the complainant, to give assurance that maintaining ethical standards is given full organisational support.

## **Dispensations:**

15. The Committee received bi-annual reports on dispensations granted by the Monitoring Officer under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI's). There is a continuing General Dispensation to all Members to be present, speak and vote where they would otherwise have a DPI in the following matters:

(a) Housing: where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council if the matter does not relate to the particular tenancy or lease of the Councillor (their spouse or partner).

(b) Council Tax: setting the council tax and related matters including setting precepts and agreeing council tax reduction schemes; and

(c) Determining an allowance, travelling expense, payment or indemnity for Councillors. This includes discussions of issues relating to officer pay which could have consequential impacts on Member Allowances.

16. A specific dispensation may also be granted where the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that:

(a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;

(b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;

(c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or

(d) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Any grant of a dispensation must specify the duration of the dispensation up to a maximum of 4 years. The regular reporting to the Standards Advisory Committee allows Members to maintain oversight of any specific dispensations that are granted.

### **Gifts & Hospitality:**

17. The Committee received quarterly reports on the requirement contained in the Code of Conduct to register gifts and hospitality received or declined with an estimated value of £25 or above.

18. In total 26 declarations were made within the reporting periods of the July 2021, September 2021, November 2021 and February 2022 meetings. The breakdown for each period is as follows: July 2021 - 1, September 2021 – 2, November 2021 – 13, February 2022 – 10. This was a very low total. However, it was considered that the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions were the main reason for this as most events were cancelled for the year and so offers of hospitality were not being received. It is noticeable that the number of declarations increased at the November 2021 meeting when restrictions were beginning to ease.

19. During the year the Committee also monitored the speed of the declarations made, taking interest in whether declarations were made within the 28-day

deadline. Seven declarations were made after the deadline, all during the reporting period of the February 2022 meeting.

20. During the year the Committee paid particular attention to any large donations received. The Committee would encourage all large gifts to be donated to the Speaker's Charity.
21. The Committee noted that acceptance of gifts and hospitality by councillors is not merely an administrative issue. Acceptance can impact on member reputation and on the council as a whole. Members need to show they are acting in the public interest and do not gain personally from receiving gifts.
22. The Register of Interests update form now includes a 'Nil Return' field in relation to Gifts and Hospitalities. This additional field allows Members to actively confirm each time they update their Register that they have declared all relevant gifts and hospitality. This helps mitigate any concerns that a Member had missed any declarations. The Committee will continue to monitor this issue and will receive quarterly update reports.

### **Member Attendance**

23. The Committee meeting in July 2021 received the annual report on Councillor and Co-optee annual report setting out Member attendance at Council and Committee meetings. The report set out how attendance was recorded and provided details of attendance at meetings by the Mayor, Councillors and Co-optees. It was noted that attendance was generally very good, averaging over 90%. It was noted that attendance had been 10% higher over the previous year, possibly connected to the meetings being held virtually over the pandemic period.
24. It was noted that the Local Government Act 1972 currently forbids the holding of virtual council meetings.
25. It was noted that some Members had lower attendance levels and it was agreed that officers would write to the Chief Whip where there were concerns about the level of attendance of any Councillor.

### **New Model Code of Conduct**

26. As reported in the last Annual Report, in May 2021, the Committee had provided feedback to the Local Government Association (LGA) on its draft Model Code of Conduct.
27. Following publication by the LGA of their new Model Code of Conduct in January 2021 the Committee established a working group to review the Council's Code.

28. The working group were pleased to note that the guidance in the new Model Code generally matched the guidance of the existing Council Code but it was felt the language and style used were clearer and more accessible and so there was value in basing the Council's new Code on the Model Code.
29. The Committee monitored the progress of the working group throughout the project and agreed a number of changes to the Model Code to better reflect local priorities, such as maintaining the £25 threshold for the declaration of gifts and hospitalities (rather than increasing it to £50).
30. Once the draft Code was completed, the Committee meeting in July 2021 agreed the final draft, which was checked against the final guidance issued by the LGA. This was then circulated to the political groups for feedback. The comments received were limited but generally positive. The Committee approved the new Code of Conduct at the meeting on 30 September 2021 and forwarded it to the Council for adoption.
31. The Code was adopted by the Council on 17 November 2021 and will be in force from the May 2022.
32. The Committee is grateful to the working group for its work on the new Code and welcomes its adoption. Full training will be provided to all Members on the new Code as part of the Member Induction programme after the elections.

### **Member / Officer Relations Protocol**

33. The Committee agreed at the meeting on 30 September 2021 that the Member / Officer Relations Protocol (the Protocol) should be updated. This Protocol is closely linked to the Code of Conduct (the Code) and, as the Code has been updated, the Protocol should be refreshed to reflect changes.
34. At the Committee meeting in September the Monitoring Officer agreed to set up a working group to consider the Protocol. This work has started and is ongoing.

### **Member Learning and Development Programme:**

35. The September meeting of the Committee received the regular yearly report providing an update on the Member Learning and Development Programme listing events that had taken place during the year to that date.
36. The Committee saw that the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic had continued, with much training moving online. It was noted that online training was generally popular with Members and that attendance at virtual sessions was generally higher than for physical sessions, as it allowed Members more flexibility in managing their busy diaries. Sessions had taken place on a number of topics including Local Government Finance, Social Media Policy and Information Governance.

37. Member Briefings were held on topics including Member / Officer Relations and Code of Conduct, Analysis of Safeguarding Adults Review and Update on the Council's Leasehold Portfolio.
38. It was noted that the Member Induction programme planning had started and that Members would be consulted on the induction they had found particularly useful (see below).

### **Member Induction**

39. The Committee meeting in November 2021 considered a report on planning for induction of Members following the election in May 2022. It was noted that Member induction after the election in May 2018 had generally been well received, and feedback from Members would be used to inform planning for induction after the 2022 election.
40. It was noted that, while some of the induction process would need to be conducted face to face, many of the training and information sessions could be undertaken remotely. It was noted that remote training had proved popular with Members and it was expected that this would be a more efficient method of providing training as it would give members flexibility with their busy schedules.
41. A cross-directorate group of officers was working on the details of the programme. A detailed programme of induction for new Members was produced, which was put into place immediately after the election.

### **Effectiveness of the Standards Advisory Committee**

42. The Committee meeting in November 2021 considered a report on the effectiveness of the Standards Advisory Committee. A survey of Members had been undertaken in November 2021. Although the number of responses was limited, they indicated that they felt the role of the Committee was understood and that the Committee was effective. Members did not appear to feel the need for change at this stage.

### **Standards Advisory Committee Work Planning for 2022-23**

43. The Committee intends to undertake a substantial work programme during 2022-23, including looking at the following items. The programme will be considered at the Committee's meeting in June 2022 and may therefore change.
  - Bi-annual monitoring of complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.
  - Quarterly monitoring of gifts and hospitality registered.

- Bi-annual reports on DPI dispensations.
  - Review of the Member / Officer Relations Protocol.
  - Members' training programme including a review of the Member Induction programme planned for after the May 2022 elections, taking into account feedback from Members.
  - Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference and procedures.
  - Monitoring of DPIs, including considerations about disclosure of Members' personal addresses and their personal safety
  - News on ethics matters elsewhere including areas such as good practice, case law, ombudsman and quasi-judicial proceedings and similar.
  - Members' attendance at meetings.
  - Annual report to Council.
  - Annual review of the Member Code of Conduct
44. The 2022/23 work programme aims to continue to embed behaviours that support the seven principles in public life described in the Nolan report by encouraging Members to apply ethical standards in their day-to-day duties and to look at how these should influence their approach to discharging their responsibilities in their individual and collective capacities.

## **Conclusion**

45. As Chair of the Committee I wish to thank my fellow committee members, the Independent Persons and the Monitoring Officer for their contributions to the Committee's business and their commitment to promoting and maintaining high standards of ethical conduct across the Council. I also wish to thank the officers of the Council for their work in supporting the Committee during the year.
46. I would particularly like to highlight how important it is that the Council has such dedicated co-opted Members who are active contributors to the Committee's discussions and have demonstrated commitment to the role of Standards in the authority. The involvement of co-opted Members should be considered as 'good governance'. We are ahead of many local authorities in this area.

John Pulford MBE  
Independent Chair

## Appendix A

### Terms of Reference of the Standards Advisory Committee

#### Standards Advisory Committee Summary Description:

The Committee performs a number of functions to maintain high standards of conduct in public life including promoting the Members Code of Conduct and considering potential breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Committee may establish Sub-Committees to consider certain matters as set out in the 'Functions' below. The Committee and any of its sub-committees may meet in private in accordance with relevant legislation as advised by the Monitoring Officer. Any meeting or part of a meeting that considers whether or not a complaint should be referred for investigation or, following an investigation should proceed to hearing, shall be held in private and all papers relating to that consideration shall remain confidential.

**Membership:** 5 elected members of the Council (not including the Mayor or more than 1 Cabinet member), Co-opted Members Plus up to 5 independent co-opted members. Co-opted members will be entitled to vote at meetings under the provisions of section 13(4)(e) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The Standards Advisory Committee (SAC) shall be chaired by an independent co-opted member.

Independent Co-opted members shall be appointed by full Council on the recommendation of the Monitoring Officer.

The term of appointment shall be 4 years unless otherwise determined by Council.

Co-opted members may serve as many terms of appointment as the Council considers appropriate.

Note – Independent Persons The Council has appointed two statutory Independent Persons to assist in dealing with complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011. They are not co-opted member of the SAC but may attend and observe any meeting of the Committee or a sub-committee established by it.

Functions	Delegation of Functions
Full details are set out in the Committee's Procedures in Part D of the Constitution, but in summary:  1. Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, councillors and co-opted	None

members of the Council.

2. Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct for Members.
3. To monitor and advise the Council about the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members in light of best practice and changes in the law.
4. Advising, training or arranging to train the Mayor, councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to ethics and probity and the Code of Conduct.
5. To appoint sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Committee's functions including the consideration and determination of complaints of breach of the code of Conduct for Members.
6. As requested by the Monitoring Officer, to establish a Dispensations Sub-Committee to advise on any applications for dispensations in relation to participation at a meeting by a member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.
7. To deal with any reports from the Monitoring Officer on any matter relating to standards of conduct.
8. Other functions relating to the standards of conduct of members under any relevant statutory provision or otherwise.
9. Report to the Council on the work of the Committee and any other matters as appropriate

• **Quorum:** A meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees shall only be quorate where at least three members of the Committee or Sub-Committee are present for its duration and such quorum must include at least one councillor and at least one independent co-opted member.

**Additional Information:**

- Constitution Part A, Section 11 (The Standards Advisory Committee and the Code of Conduct for Members)
- Constitution Part C, Section 31 (The Code of Conduct for Members)
- Constitution Part D, Section 53 (Standards Advisory Committee Procedures)



## **Appendix B**

### **Procedures**

#### **Standards Advisory Committee Procedures**

##### **1. Composition**

1.1 The Standards Advisory Committee shall be comprised of 5 Members of the Council (not including the Mayor or more than 1 Cabinet Member) and each political group may appoint up to 3 substitutes, appointed by the Council in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality; and up to 7 persons who are not Members or officers of the Council or any other relevant authority (i.e. Co-opted members).

1.2 The Co-opted member(s) will be entitled to vote at meetings under the provisions of section 13(4)(e) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Standards Advisory Committee shall be chaired by a Co-opted member.

1.3 The Committee shall establish Hearings and other Sub-Committees in accordance with its terms of reference and these procedures.

##### **2. Appointment of Co-Opted Members**

2.1 A person may not be appointed as a Co-opted member of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees unless the appointment is approved by Full Council. The term of appointment shall be for 4 years unless otherwise determined by Council or the Co-optee does not continue to fulfil any required conditions as may be determined by the Authority from time to time. Co-opted members may serve as many terms of appointment as the Council considers appropriate.

##### **3. Roles and Functions**

3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee has the following roles:

(a) To recommend to the Monitoring Officer whether or not any complaint of a breach by the Mayor, a Councillor or a co-opted member of the Members Code of Conduct should be referred for investigation by the Monitoring Officer or an investigator appointed by the Monitoring Officer; and where a complaint has been subject to such investigation, to recommend whether or not the complaint should proceed to hearing. Where the Monitoring Officer considers that a complaint should not be subject to investigation or should not proceed to hearing, they shall convene an Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee comprising at least 3 different Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor) which shall make the final decision on the matter;

(b) To receive regular quarterly reports from the Monitoring Officer on the numbers of complaints of the Code received, the decisions taken by the Monitoring Officer (in consultation with the Independent Person) on such complaints and investigation outcomes where the investigation determines there was no evidence of a failure to comply with the code or where the investigation outcome recommends a local resolution;

(c) To convene a Hearings Sub-Committee of 3 Members of the Standards Advisory Committee comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor to consider any matter where the investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the Code and a local resolution is not possible or appropriate;

(d) To make such recommendations to Council in respect of the matter as the Hearings Sub-Committee considers appropriate as a result of any matter referred including;

(i) Reporting its findings to Council for information;

(ii) Recommending to the member's Group Leader (or in the case of ungrouped members, recommend to Council or to Committees) removal from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;

(iii) Recommending to the Mayor removal from the Executive, or from particular Portfolio responsibilities;

(iv) Recommending the Monitoring Officer arrange training for the member;

(v) Recommending removal from outside appointments to which they have been appointed or nominated;

(vi) Recommending withdrawing facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access;

(vii) Recommending excluding the member from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Executive Committee and Sub-Committee meetings;

(viii) Recommending the Member to contact the Council via specified point(s) of contact;

(e) To convene a Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee of at least three different Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor) to consider any appeal against a finding of, or sanction recommended by, the Hearings Sub-Committee;

(f) To receive reports on compliance with any recommendation(s) made for sanctions to be applied in respect of any member;

(g) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, Members of the Council, co-opted members including church and parent governor representatives and where the Committee considers that there may be issues of

concern recommending that the Monitoring Officer considers and reports on the issues raised;

(h) Assisting the Mayor, Members of the Council, co-opted members including church and other faiths and parent governor representatives to observe the Council's Code of Conduct for Members;

(i) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct for Members;

(j) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members;

(k) Advising, training or arranging to train the Mayor, Members of the Council and co-opted members including church and other faiths and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Code of Conduct for Members;

(l) To act as an advisory body in respect of any matters referred to the Standards Committee by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) or Community Forums in respect of probity issues arising out of the codes and protocols applicable to relevant members of the LSP and Community Forums as set out in the Community Forum handbook and as may be amended from time to time;

(m) To advise on allegations of Member breaches of the Protocols set out in the constitution as may be referred to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer and to make recommendations with regard to such allegations as maybe so referred;

(n) Advising on local protocols for both Officer and Member governance;

(o) To monitor and review Member and Officer Procedures for registering interests and declaring gifts and hospitality;

(p) To receive periodic reports on the Council's Ethical Governance arrangements, on whistle blowing arrangements and complaints; and

(q) As requested by the Monitoring Officer, to establish a Dispensations Sub-Committee to advise on any applications for dispensations in relation to participation at a meeting by a member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

#### **4. Validity of proceedings**

4.1 A meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees shall only be quorate where at least three members of the Committee or Sub-Committee are present for its duration and such quorum must include at least one councillor and at least one co-opted member.

4.2 Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 applies in relation to meetings of the Standards Advisory Committee or its Sub-Committees as it applies to meetings of the Council.

#### **5. Hearings Sub-Committee and Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee**

5.1 Any Hearings Sub-Committee or Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee shall comprise a minimum of three Members of the Standards Advisory Committee at least two of whom shall be co-opted members.

5.2 The Hearings Sub-Committee shall consider complaints referred to it that the Mayor, an elected or co-opted Member of the Council may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members or local protocol where the complaint has been subject to an investigation arranged by the Monitoring Officer and shall make recommendations accordingly. The Hearings Sub-Committee shall decide at the outset of the meeting whether it is in the public interest that the Hearing is held in a public or private session in accordance with relevant statutory guidance as advised by the Monitoring Officer.

5.3 The membership of the Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee shall not include any member who served on the Hearings Sub-Committee that considered the same complaint.

5.4 The Independent Person, or if that person is unable to act a reserve Independent Person, shall have the right to attend all meetings of the Hearings Sub-Committee or Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee as an observer but may not vote or participate in the decision making.

## **6. Attendance Requirements**

6.1 In the event that any Member of the Committee does not attend three or more consecutive meetings of the Committee, the Committee may draw the attention of the Council to such non-attendance and may recommend that the member concerned be replaced on the Committee.

6.2 The Committee shall not do so without first giving the absent Member an opportunity to make representations (which may be made in writing) as to their non-attendance and any matters they wish the Committee to take into account.

## **7. Procedures**


7.1 The Committee shall maintain these procedures to enable it to discharge the arrangements under its Terms of Reference.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 The Committee and any of its Sub-Committees may meet in private in accordance with the relevant legislation as advised by the Monitoring Officer. Any meeting or part of a meeting that considers whether or not a complaint should be referred for investigation or, following an investigation should proceed to hearing, shall be held in private and all papers relating to that consideration shall remain confidential.



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<p><b>Council</b></p> <p>27 July 2022</p>	
<p><b>Report of:</b> Susannah Beasley-Murray, Director of Supporting Families</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22</b></p>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Maium Talukdar, Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services and Education</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer, Children and Culture
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	N/A
<b>Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome</b>	[State Priority and/or Outcome from the <a href="#">Strategic Plan 2020-23</a> ]  Priority 1 - People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities

## Executive Summary

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021 to 2022 sets out the purpose of the board, how it functions in Tower Hamlets, what has been achieved over the last year, priorities and planned work for the future.

## Recommendations:

Council is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22

## 1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Not applicable

## **2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

2.1 Not applicable

## **3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

3.1 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) demonstrates our continuing commitment to the corporate parenting principles and shows how we deliver on them across many partnerships and services. The board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council.

3.2 Alongside the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues. The board is able to take a strategic approach to the experiences of children looked after and care leavers and work with partners to continually develop and strengthen practice in relation to our corporate parenting responsibilities.

3.3 The CLICC has produced a 'Wish List' of their priorities and this is set out in full in the CPB Annual Report. The list has also been incorporated within the 'What are our priorities?' sections of the annual report and is reflected in details of progress made during the last year and plans for the future.

3.4 The CPB Annual Report 2021-2022 provides information on a wide range of achievements including:

- Development of the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) with establishment of further forums for specific age groups:
  - CLICC Plus (for 18 to 25 year olds) – A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and recruitment in underway to appoint Leads for independent living, education, employment & training, safety & security, health & wellbeing and finances
  - Teen CLICC (for 13 to 17 year olds) – a group of young people are working with the Haileybury Youth Centre Girls Group to develop the CLICC for this age range. A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and the 'Share my World' consultation gathered feedback on care experiences
  - Junior CLICC (for 8 to 12 year olds) – discussions have taken place with some interested families and this group will continue to be developed in 2022.
- Design and launch of the 'Know Now' APP for Care Experienced Young People with young people involved to ensure it meets their needs.



- Information & advice sessions with young people at Kitcat Terrace – including regular attendance of relevant professionals and partner agencies such as Police, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Department of Work and Pensions to answer questions and share information.
- Supporting young people through transitions and referrals - Personal Advisors (PAs) are now involved at an earlier stage (by the time a young person is 17 and a half years old) to assist in the transition from cared for to care experienced services.
- Educational attainment Year 11 at GCSE - the Virtual School have achieved the best ever recorded outcomes at GCSE for children in our care. The percentage achieving a Level 4+ pass in English and Maths with 3 other subjects has risen from 19% to 46% (the national average is 14%).
- Blended learning and digital provision - 16,899 devices were distributed to schools in Tower Hamlets, including to children in our care and care experienced young people, via the scheme in place during the pandemic. This is more devices per child than any other authority in the UK.
- Delivery of Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) and responding to the pandemic:
  - Face to face IHAs recommenced in Sep 2020 and any previous virtual IHAs were reviewed to ensure that there was previous/future face to face medical contact to validate the assessment.
  - A literature review was carried out into the pros and cons of virtual health contacts. This supported more reflective discussions about virtual and face to face health assessments. The literature review was followed with a video blog and '7-minute' briefing document to aid learning and support multi-agency partners.
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Social Care Team - 83 new referrals to the team for children (or sibling groups) on a Looked After Child (LAC) Plan in 2021. The Tower Hamlets CAMHS in Social Care Team aims to fill the gap where there are needs but local (for young people out of borough) CAMHS are not able to provide support.

3.5 The report also sets out 'next steps' and plans for the future, including:

- Further development and expansion of Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) groups
- Delivery of 'Create your own Podcast' Project to bring to light the day-to-day experiences of care experienced young people
- Increased training and awareness for social workers and personal advisers on services and support available for children

- Service development and establishment of a Learning Hub at Kitcat Terrace providing more face to face support and rolling programmes, including functional Maths & English
- Delivery of Mantra Music Project providing mentoring and music industry opportunities to a group of care experienced young people
- Development of health pathways, guidelines and services to refer to the priorities set out by young people to ensure they are acknowledged and addressed within service changes
- Health steering group to led initiatives such as development of a local health profile and health passports
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the CLICC and other stakeholders to develop an Emotional Wellbeing Champion Pilot Scheme for care experienced young people.

#### **4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) is committed to delivering on the corporate parenting principles for all children in care and care leavers. This report provides information about how the board does this through its activities, engagement and plans for the future.

#### **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 There are no other specific statutory implications.

#### **6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report

#### **7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out seven principles which local authorities should follow when carrying out functions in relation to children who are or have been looked after by them. Broadly speaking these principles require local authorities to aim to secure the best possible outcome for these children and young people.

- 7.2 Statutory guidance 'Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers' (February 2018) sets out how these principles should be applied.
- 7.3 Although the creation and maintenance of a Corporate Parenting Board is not a statutory requirement, it is suggested as good practice in the guidance. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to do anything which is calculated to facilitate the discharge of any of its functions. The matters referred to in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.
- 

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE

### **Appendices**

- Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22

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

- NONE

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture

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CHANCE**  
for **EVERY  
CHILD**

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# Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021/22

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The children we care for and care experienced young people

Children Looked After

334 children were looked after by the local authority (at end of Mar 2022 – **this was 306 for Mar 2021**)

Under 5	46
5 to 9	44
10 to 15	97
16 to 17	147

There were 67 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) (at end of Mar 2022 - **this was 29 at Mar 2021**)

CLA long term placement stability 65% (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 73% at Mar 2021**)

Average no. of placement moves 1.6 (end of Mar 2021 - **this was 1.5 at Mar 2021**)

Accommodation

84% of allocated care leavers were in suitable accommodation (at end of Mar 2022 - **this was 96% at Mar 2021**)

Care Leavers

At 31st March 2022 the Through Care Service was working with a cohort of 418 young people, between the ages of 14 – 25 (**this was 435 at Mar 2021**)

Health

97% of Children Looked After had an annual health check within 12 months (end Mar 2022 – **this was 86% at Mar 2021**)

82% of Children Looked After had an annual dental check within 12 months (end Mar 2022 - **this was 60% at Mar 2021**)

Education, Training and Employment

68% of pupils making expected progress (autumn term 2021/22 - **this was 62% for autumn term 2020/21**)

96% of pupils had a personal education plan meeting during the term (autumn term 2021/22 - **this was 95% for autumn term 2020/21**)

97% of allocated care leavers had a pathway plan (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 98% at Mar 2021**)

64% of allocated care leavers were in employment, education or training (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 73% at Mar 2021**)

## Governance

### Legal Context

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Section 1) sets out seven corporate parenting principles which local authorities must have regard to for looked after children or care leavers. Statutory guidance for local authorities ‘Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers’ was published in February 2018. The guidance highlights that the critical question for local authorities as the ‘corporate parent’ should be ‘would this be good enough for my child’?

### The principles

In order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people

4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

### Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

The board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council. The corporate parenting principles underpin the work of the board as it takes a strategic approach to the experiences of children we care for and care experienced young people and works with partners to meet corporate parenting responsibilities.

Alongside the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC), the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues.



A CPB Action Plan was developed in Spring 2021, which used feedback on priorities from the CLICC (their ‘Wish List’) as a foundation. Progress against the action plan was reported to the board throughout 2021/22 and is included within the following sections of this report.

The complete original ‘Wish List’ from the CLICC is shown below and have been incorporated within the ‘What are our priorities?’ sections of the annual report.

The diagram on page 5 sets out the membership of the board and a full list is provided at Appendix A. Appendix B provides an overview of the topics covered in CPB meetings during 2020/21.

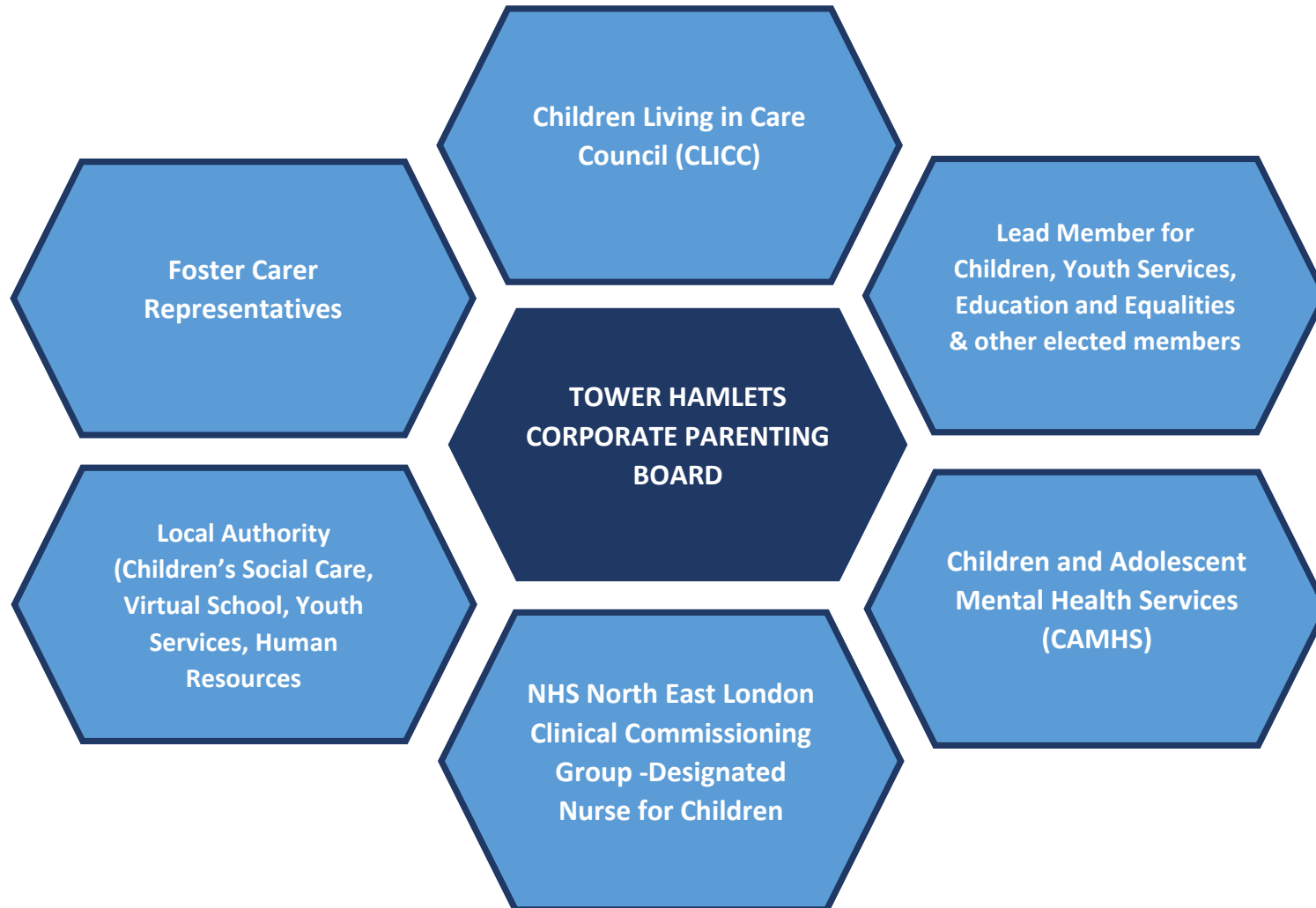
**CLICC ‘Wish List’**

- Creating wrap around services – identifying gaps in service delivery and exploring how feedback from young people can be embedded in practice.
- Strengthening joined-up approach to transitions – working with young people to find ways to make transitions smoother in the future.
- Creating CLICC Ambassadors Scheme – to represent children looked after and care leavers by advocating for them and being their voice.
- Training and development for social workers – young people to help shape the future training offer, including awareness

of the wider services and opportunities that young people may need to access.

- Affordable travel – improving awareness of, and access to, travel entitlements and increasing the offer through the Pan-London CLICC Participation Group.
- Local Offer for Care Leavers – delivering a more ‘young person friendly’ resource.
- Relationships with professionals and agencies – establishing ways that young people can easily raise and address any concerns about relationships with staff.
- Referral processes – working with young people to identify challenges with referral processes ensuring support is provided and reducing the need to repeat information.
- Mental health and wellbeing – finding more ways to provide support around emotional wellbeing for young people.

## Membership of the Corporate Parenting Board



## Role of Foster Carers

The Corporate Parenting Board benefits from the experience and expertise of two Foster Carer Representatives, who are also members of the Tower Hamlets Foster Carers Association. Their input to the board ensures that the voice of foster carers informs all discussions, actions taken and planning for the future.

### Tower Hamlets Foster Carers Association (THFCA)

The THFCA helps and supports foster carers and acts as a voice for them. They work closely with the council and other partners, putting carer's views and experiences forward, and looking for ways to make improvements. As well as supporting existing carers members of the THFCA are dedicated to promoting fostering and act as ambassadors in the recruitment of new carers.

One of the ways in which the THFCA brings foster carers together with their children is through events and outings. Activities during 2021 included trips to Chessington World of Adventures, Southend-on-Sea and seeing a Christmas Pantomime.

### The Tower Hamlets Fostering Service

Following some staffing changes in 2020/21 the Fostering Service has established a permanent and secure workforce which is having a positive impact on support and communication to foster carers.

The Foster Carer Referral Scheme has been developed further with fostering households holding information coffee mornings, word-of-mouth recruitment activities and Fostering Ambassadors attending recruitment events to encourage and promote fostering applications.

### Foster Carers' Award Ceremony

After a break due to the pandemic, the Foster Carers' Award Ceremony was able to take place in March 2022. This provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievement of carers and for the council to show its appreciation of the valuable work they do.

### Training for Foster Carers

Significant progress has been made on training opportunities for foster carers. The service's new online provision has been accessed by an incredible 180 learners and a new training brochure is in development which will offer courses both in the classroom and online.

The Fostering Service has also introduced a six-week parenting course 'Foundations for Attachment and Parenting' which is being delivered by the new Fostering Therapeutic Service. Fifteen fostering households have successfully completed the training since in 2021/22.

**Mockingbird Programme (part of the Fostering Network)**

The Fostering Service remains committed to rolling out the Mockingbird Family Model which offers carers additional support. Carers and staff have attended a webinar featuring the Fostering Network and the service is now looking at how they can link up carers to create new groups. Work is underway to establish a third Mockingbird Hub to increase the number of carers who can benefit from the model which nurtures the relationships between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring community.

## The voice of children we care for and care experienced young people

### What are our priorities?

- Developing and expanding the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC), including establishing thematic leads and developing ambassador programmes
- Increasing co-production and engagement opportunities for the children we care for and care experienced young people
- Ensuring all young people are aware of advocacy support and how to access it

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)

Work has continued throughout the last year to further develop opportunities for the children we care for, and care experienced young people, to get involved and have their voices heard.

Plans to expand the CLICC, and establish further forums for specific age groups, have progressed:

- CLICC Plus (for 18 to 25 year olds) – A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and recruitment is underway to appoint Leads for independent living, education, employment & training, safety & security, health & wellbeing and finances

- Teen CLICC (for 13 to 17 year olds) – a group of young people are working with the Haileybury Youth Centre Girls Group to develop the CLICC for this age range. A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and the ‘Share my World’ consultation gathered feedback on care experiences
- Junior CLICC (for 8 to 12 year olds) – discussions have taken place with some interested families and this group will continue to be developed in 2022.

Activities to promote and develop the CLICC in 2021 have included:

- An Open Day in October 2021 – held in partnership with Independent Reviewing Officers and the Foster Carers Association and focused on the Junior & Teen CLICC
- Meetings with Children’s Social Care, Fostering & Through Care Teams to share information and promote the groups
- Leaflet promoting the CLICC produced and distributed
- 30 volunteers supported ‘Share my World’ event (aimed at foster cares and their young people in care)

#### ‘Know Now’ APP for Care Experienced Young People

The app was developed during 2021/22 with young people involved in the design and content to ensure it meets their needs. The app was launched in March 2022 and will enable care experienced young people to access local information, guidance and support.

This will include details of the Advocacy Service available through Barnardos. The App will also allow communication between care experienced young people and their social workers and personal advisors.

### **Social events and activities**

There were a wide range of opportunities to socialise, learn new skills and provide support between young people taking place during 2022/23. These included:

- Collaboration session with Bexley Children Living in Care Council during National Care Leavers Week
- ‘Come Dine with Me’ contest
- Residential Trip in Wales
- Christmas Cinema trip and meal

### **Workshop with Queen Mary University**

The CLICC worked with researchers from Queen Mary University to identify issues that they would like professionals to be aware of and understand. Discussions during a workshop session explored their experiences at different ages and stages of their lives with the development of brief story styled ‘scripts’.

Young people reported how much they enjoyed the session and that the approach helped to bring their ideas to life. They felt that the scripts would help make it easier to pursue the issues raised with other people and that they wanted to find ways of taking this work further.

## **What will we do next?**

### **Development and expansion of the CLICC**

The CLICC groups will continue to undertake activities focused on promoting the benefits for children and young people from getting involved, which include:

- A space to share their voice
- Support accessing services
- Social and creative activities
- Access to a peer support network

Key activities to strengthen the CLICC groups in 2022/23 will include:

- Recruiting to all vacant post within CLICC Plus and continuing to meet on a weekly basis at Kitkat Terrace
- CLICC Plus to hold regular meetings to review the ‘Wish List’ of priorities and other items
- CLICC plus to liaise with the Young Mayor and Youth Council and join the ‘All Participation Forum’ meeting scheduled for July 2022
- Recruiting to all posts within the TEEN CLICC and continuing to meet every Friday at Haileybury Youth Centre with the wider girls group.
- Identifying families who can support the Junior CLICC and appointment a Chair and Deputy Chair for the group.

**‘Create your own Podcast’ Project**

This media initiative aims to bring to light the day-to-day issues of care experienced young people, how they cope and their solutions. The podcast will be an opportunity to use the feedback gathered through the workshop with Queen Mary University (see above) and further develop the story style scripts that the young people had started work on.

**Event for children, young people and families**

A day of activities and creative opportunities is being planned for children we care for. The event will be focused on having fun and exploring different mediums for children to express their feelings and views. The day will include a presentation by the children to Senior Managers and Members and will also offer the opportunity for social care staff to drop in and have informal conversations with attendees.

**Case Study – Children Living in Care Council**

When members of the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) highlighted the mental health and wellbeing challenges they had faced during pandemic restrictions this led to work with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to create a focus group to explore the issues. The sessions gave young people an opportunity to share their experiences, seek advice on coping mechanisms and to hear about other resources and services available.

The focus group also inspired some of the young people to find more ways to support other young people with their mental wellbeing. Some of the participants were interested in becoming ‘wellbeing champions’ and work to create these roles is underway. One young person wanted to pursue a career in mental health. They have successfully completed their level 2 qualification in Mental Health Practice and are now looking for an apprenticeship within the NHS to complete their level 3.

## Services & support for children we care for and care experienced young people

### What are our priorities?

- Delivering 'Wrap around' services to make sure all services come together for the young person
- Ensuring young people experience smooth transitions from one place or situation to another
- Developing and improving relationships between staff and young people
- Reducing referral fatigue for young people when accessing new services and support
- Enhancing training and awareness for social workers on the range of services and support available for young people

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Information & advice session with young people

Relevant professionals, such as Education, Training, Employment Advisors and Duty Managers have been available at every 'Wednesday Late Night' session held at Kitcat Terrace to respond to questions raised by young people. Further sessions have been arranged with attendance from the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Department of Work and Pensions to provide expertise in other areas, as required by young people.

### Supporting young people through transitions and referrals

Personal Advisors (PAs) are now involved at an earlier stage (by the time a young person is 17 and a half years old) to assist in the transition from 'cared for' to 'care experienced' services. In many cases the PA will have also been the social worker for a young person which offers greater continuity. Social workers, PAs and Support Workers are attending most appointments that children and young people on their caseload have. Especially those arranged for tenancy sign ups, college registrations and appointment with the Home Office, as these can be particularly challenging for young people. All of this work is aimed at helping to ensure smoother transitions and referral processes and to reduce the need for young people to repeat their story which can cause additional stress and anxiety.

#### Building and improving relationships with professionals

Young people have access through a range of channels to freely give feedback and raise questions and concerns. This is offered through service staff and managers, the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) and the Advocacy Service (from Barnardos). Issues are escalated to the Head of Service level and beyond if necessary to ensure swift resolutions.



### Lifelong Links

Lifelong Links was introduced in Tower Hamlets two years ago and offers the children we care for a chance to connect with their support network for the years to come. The aim of the initiative is to find family members and other people who care about the child, such as former foster carers, teachers, youth workers and family friends. Everyone is then brought together in a family group conference where they can all chat and discuss support they can offer both now and in future. Examples of the outcomes from this work include a child reconnecting with their mother who lives outside the UK and a child getting back in touch with a school friend who they knew when they were in a previous fostering placement.

### Recruitment and training of staff

The Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) has been supporting the Social Work Academy to offer feedback on the recruitment and training of new social workers. The CLICC has also been involved in other recruitment activity including the appointment of the new Director of Supporting Families.

### Refresh of the Local Offer for Care Leavers

The CLICC has helped to steer the updating of the Local Offer for Care Leavers by providing feedback on what young people wanted to be included and the layout used.

### What will we do next?

#### Training and awareness for social workers and personal advisors

A range of agencies are currently invited to service meetings, open days, and other events to inform and educate social workers and personal advisors about their services and support they can provide for our young people. We plan to work with our Social Work Academy to design training specific to the service needs and will ensure this learning and development time is prioritised for our staff groups. Where possible, we want to involve our young people in co-producing and co-facilitating this learning and development offer.

#### Enhancing relationships between staff and young people

The implementation of 'Listening Circles' as part of the Restorative Practice offer is planned to further build on the positive relationships with care experienced young people. Young people have already had the opportunity to meet the Directorate Leadership Team and put a face to some of those with corporate parenting responsibility for them in a relaxed environment. The aim is to continue this twice a year, or on a quarterly basis if possible. Children's social care services are also proactively working with Barnardo's on how feedback from young people can be used to improve relationships and practice.

### Service development at Kitcat Terrace

Our vision is to create ‘empower and progress’ working partnerships with providers and services, with Kitcat Terrace as a local hub where this is delivered, so that we provide holistic support for young people. As set out below in the ‘Education, enrichment, employment and training’ part of this report, the offer at Kitcat Terrace includes support focused on learning and achievement but the following will also sit alongside this:

- Barnardo’s – access to advocacy support
- Housing Options Support Team (HOST) – access to Leaving Care Housing Options Officer
- Youth Participation Service – providing support with further development of independent living skills

Discussions are underway to develop the offer at Kitcat Terrace further to include:

- A Benefits Advisor to be available one day a week
- ‘Compass Safe East’ (sexual health and substance misuse service) to be available one day a week
- ‘Step Forward’ to potentially offer therapeutic support and outreach services. This service provides an LGBTQ+ group (Step Out) and we are looking at how this be of benefit to our care experienced young people.

### Case Study – Through Care Service

P.L had completed a Level 3 in Business Studies and wanted to attend university and pursue a career in finance but was unable to access funding due to their immigration status. This situation persisted for two years and then with support from Education, Training & Employment (ETE) Advisors P.L gained a place on a Level 3 Finance and Accountancy course with a placement, which allowed them to gain experience and a qualification in their chosen field.

ETE Advisors undertook research and found a university scholarship which P.L was eligible to apply for which removed the barrier they had been facing to higher education. P.L was successful with their application for funding and then, with further support, was also successful in securing a place at University to study Accountancy and Finance. P.L’s course has been going well and they remain focused on their career progression. ETE Advisors have since been able to source funding to attend university for another young person with the same immigration status.

## Education, enrichment, employment and training

### What are our priorities?

- Delivering consistent support which helps young people to maintain their education and access opportunities that are right for them at all stages
- Increasing apprenticeship opportunities for care experienced young people whilst ensuring they are the right type and level
- Offering functional skills training (Maths & English) to ensure young people can access future employment and training opportunities
- Improving availability and awareness of travel concessions

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Educational attainment of children we care for

68% of children we care for in the Virtual School are making expected progress in the core subjects of English/Maths (Autumn 2021). This rises to 75% for those children we care for (for one year+). This is up from 53% (Spring 2021) and 58% (Summer 2021).

#### Educational attainment Year 11 at GCSE

The Virtual School have achieved the best ever recorded outcomes at GCSE for children we care for. The percentage achieving a

Level 4+ pass in English and Maths with 3 other subjects has risen from 19% to 46% (the national average is 14%). Accurate progress data is not available due to the pandemic but 67% of children we care for made 'expected' or 'better' progress in English and 47% in Maths (this is for Personal Education Plan (PEP) targets based on KS2 attainment). The highest attaining students achieved multiple Level 9 & Level 8's in their subjects studied. These achievements have been celebrated at the first Virtual School Awards in 2 years.

#### Blended learning and digital provision

16,899 devices were distributed to schools in Tower Hamlets, including to children we care for and care experienced young people, via the scheme in place during the pandemic. This is more devices per child than any other authority in the UK.

#### Pupil Education Plans (PEP)

96% of pupils overseen by the Virtual School have had a PEP meeting in the Autumn 2021 term. 92% of these plans were rated Green and Amber, which means they are completed to a high standard and within time frames.

### Improvements to language

The language used in Virtual School reports, policies and on the website has been updated to reflect the recommendations of children we care for and national policy.

### Care Leaver Employability Working Group (CLEWG)

The CLEWG led on a range of activities in 2021/22 which were aimed at exploring and sharing best practice so that this learning could be applied to the work being undertaken to improve outcomes for young people with care experience. The work of the group has informed action taken across a wide range of issues as well as plans for the future.

### Education, Training & Employment (ETE) Advisors in the Through Care Team (TCT)

The team and the advisors support young people to aspire to, and achieve, the best possible outcomes. The ETE Advisors have been instrumental in taking forward work to raise Maths & English attainment rates. This has included ensuring data on achievements for care experienced young people are captured so that they are supported effectively at all stages and the development of programmes at Kitcat Terrace (see below).

Other progress and achievements during 2021 included:

- Supporting young people to access Higher Education opportunities with 19 university admissions from care experienced young people for undergraduate programs in 2021
- Finding ways to overcome barriers to progressing in education for care experienced young people with No Recourse to Public Funding (NRPF). This has resulted in 2 undergraduate young people gaining full scholarships and securing 3 grant applications for Further Education for learners with NRTPF
- Assisting with applications to the Civil Service Internship Scheme. In 2020-21 12 young people were successful in securing civil service roles due to the support of ETE Advisors.

### Help with travel costs

Affordably travel is essential for young people to access education, employment and social activities. Alongside the Transport for London free travel offer to children under the age of 18 who are in full-time education, the Through Care Service supports young people to apply for the 18+ Oyster student card and monthly top up assistance. The service also supports unaccompanied asylum seeking children with their travel. The Children Living in Care Group (CLICC) will continue to campaign for assistance with travel through the Pan London CLICC Participation Group.

## What will we do next?

### Blended learning and digital provision

The Virtual School will be re-starting the pre-pandemic laptop programme for all children we care for in secondary schools and continue moving towards a policy of digital inclusion.

### Learning Hub at Kitkat Terrace

The Learning Hub is being developed to provide more face to face support for those who need additional engagement to overcome barriers to successful outcomes. The hub will offer rolling programs which provide continuous accessibility.

The provider 'Prevista' will deliver a Level 2 Functional Skills English and Maths Programme to help address a learning gap which is frequently an issue for care experienced young people. Extensions to this programme are being explored, such as support from Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service and progression to the West Ham Foundations "Future Pathways" programme.

The offer at the Learning Hub will continue to be developed and expansion through additional providers will be explored such as the National Careers Service, to support employment and Education Pathway Plans, and provision of in-house education and training opportunities in maths, English, ICT and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

### Post 16 Pilot

A national initiative is being piloted for Virtual School Headteachers to support children we care for and care experienced young people. If this leads to funding being available the Tower Hamlets Virtual School has plans in place to rapidly reorganise to become an all-through college.

### Mantra Music Project

A music writer and rapper, who has had care experience, has received funding from Youth Music to deliver this initiative. The council will be working with him to support five care experienced young people, two of which are from Tower Hamlets. For our young people wanting to break into the music industry, Mantra Music will be providing mentorship, alongside 2 professionally produced singles, 1 music video each, artwork, press shots and the opportunity to win £1000 to help get their music off the ground.

### Case Study – Virtual School

MN experienced instability in their education – attending 4 primary schools due to care placement changes. The Virtual School (VS) supported targeted work, via the Pupil Education Plan and Pupil Premium, leading to good progress. The VS supported MN's transition to secondary school and worked with an out of borough authority to maintain EHCP provision.

Pupil Premium Plus provided pastoral support in Year 7 & 8, and with Personal Education Plan (PEP) planning the focus then moved to support on Maths, English and Online tuition. MN experienced a further change in placement but managed to settle and maintained their schooling.

MN has participated in many 'Give it a Go' enrichment activities and their VS Teacher has provided consistent support throughout changes in carers and schooling. MN has recently attended a creative dance and drama workshop at the English National Ballet displaying enthusiasm and talent for dance, movement and poetry. Their participation will be recognised at the Virtual School Awards Ceremony 2022.

## Health and wellbeing

### What are our priorities?

- Improving communication between health professionals and young people
- Development of young peoples' Emotional Wellbeing Champions Programme
- Development of mindfulness and mind & body support and information for young people which focuses on positive approaches to mental health

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Service delivery during the pandemic

Following restrictions introduced during the pandemic face to face Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) recommenced in Sep 2020 and any previous virtual IHAs were reviewed to ensure that there was previous/future face to face medical contact to validate the assessment.

The Clinical Commissioning Group developed guidelines to support risk stratification and delivery of virtual health assessments. These were updated with each government change to social distancing. The guidelines supported the provider with risk assessment for the children and young people that would benefit from face to face contact. The guidelines were also shared with multi-agency

partners so that they could contribute towards decision making of the prioritisation of health needs for the children we care for.

A literature review was carried out into the pros and cons of virtual health contacts. This supported more reflective discussions about virtual and face to face health assessments. The literature review was followed with a video blog and '7-minute' briefing document to aid learning and support multi-agency partners.

#### Capturing the voice of children and young people

Activities undertaken to capture the views and experiences for children and young people have include:

- The quality assurance of health assessments ensures that the voice of the child has been captured.
- Multi-professional relationships have improved through the Children Looked After & Care Leavers Health and Wellbeing Steering Group, which has enabled the voice of the child to be shared amongst professionals, allowing services to adapt to meet their needs.
- Liaison with the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) through discussions between health representatives and young people at the Corporate Parenting Board and engagement with priorities set out by young people (the 'Wish List') which provides an evidence base for professionals to integrate into their practice.



### Referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Social Care Team

In 2021 83 new referrals to the team were for children (or sibling groups) on a Looked After Child Plan. Care experienced children and young people live in foster placements and residential homes both in Tower Hamlets but also in neighbouring London boroughs and further afield. Those placed outside of the borough face difficulties in accessing their local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for a variety of reasons. The Tower Hamlets CAMHS in Social Care Team, therefore, aims to fill the gap where there are needs but local CAMHS are not able to provide support.

This involves providing a CAMHS assessment where needed but also providing clinical input to support children and their carers where there are issues regarding placement stability. Other roles include consulting to the wider network of concern around the child including schools as well as helping the allocated Social Worker access a local CAMHS provision.

### Emotional wellbeing screening

Emotional Wellbeing screening is offered for all children and young people coming into the care system who are still in our care by the time of their second review. This involves reaching out to the allocated Social Worker to offer a 'screening consultation' before deciding on next steps. In 2021 54 Emotional Wellbeing Screens for care experienced young people were offered and 44 were taken up and undertaken. The outcomes included further consultation on

request for 34 individuals, clinical Interventions to support a placement for 3 individuals and a CAMHS Assessments for 2 individuals.

*NB: It is important to note that this does not represent the full number of care experienced children from Tower Hamlets who are receiving support from CAMHS as some children are receiving a service in their local area.*

### What will we do next?

#### Responding to the priorities of children we care for and care experienced young people

The development of health pathways, guidelines and services need to refer to the priorities set out by young people (the 'Wish List') to ensure they are acknowledged and addressed within service changes. The Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) will continue to be consulted key areas of development, such as the Health Passport. Arrangements will be made for the Local Health Team to attend a CLICC meeting to learn more about their experiences and ideas.

#### Emotional Wellbeing Champions Pilot Scheme

As previously mentioned, some of the young people who took part in the focus groups arranged by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) highlighted their interest in creating the role of 'Wellbeing Champion'.



The sessions provided a space for sharing experiences, exploring ways to improve emotional wellbeing and learning more about the range of advice and support options that are available. Having seen the impact of this the young people want 'Wellbeing Champions' to be able to offer support and guidance to other young people. Work will be undertaken by CAMHS, the CLICC and other stakeholders in 2022 to develop an Emotional Wellbeing Champion Pilot Scheme for care experienced young people.

### Children in our Care and Care Experienced Young People Health Steering Group

The work of the steering group over the next year will include the following initiatives:

- Local Health Profile – this will provide a clear picture of what the main health needs of children are so that themes and key findings can be identified. A task and finish group will be set up to take this work forward through meetings led by operational partners.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ's) – we will track information over a 12 month period and use this to map additional insight about the emotional wellbeing needs of children.
- Health passports - another sub-group will be established to explore how we can improve the use and quality of health passports. This will include how an e-passport could be created in alignment with health service systems.

### Case Study – CAMHS in SCT

One of the main vulnerabilities for care experienced young people is the way that eligibility for services can change whenever they move to a placement in a different borough.

JH was a 17 year old who was assessed as suffering from symptoms of Complex PTSD as a result of early experiences of witnessing domestic violence in their family of origin. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Social Care Team assessed JH whilst they were on a Child Protection Plan and living at home. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) was recommended to work through their traumatic experiences at a time when they felt safe to do this. Whilst waiting for the right time for CBT they were monitored for any risks of self-harm and suicidality.

JH was then placed in local authority care and provided with semi-independent accommodation outside of the borough. Although a referral was made to CAMHS in the other borough for follow up therapeutic support they did not meet the criteria for this due to the amount of time they had lived in the area. Therefore the plan to offer therapy within Tower Hamlets CAMHS continued so that JH did not lose access to an intervention they had been waiting for.

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report – One Page Summary

The voice of children we care for & care experienced young people

Priorities

- Developing Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)
- Increasing co-production & engagement opportunities
- Ensuring all young people are aware of advocacy support

Progress

- Chairs for CLICC Groups, promotion programme & events
- ‘Know Now’ APP for care experienced young people
- Research with Queen Mary University

Next steps

- Expand CLICC Plus, TEEN CLICC & Junior CLICC
- More engagement & involvement – e.g. All Participation Forum, Just 4 You event & Podcast
- Promote advocacy services through new channels

Services and support for children we care for & care experienced young people

Priorities

- ‘Wrap around’ services for young people
- Smooth transitions and reduced referral fatigue
- Developing and improve relationships between staff and young people
- Enhance awareness amongst professionals of services available

Progress

- Information and advice sessions for young people
- Earlier engagement to support transitions
- CLICC work with Social Work Academy – recruitment & retention
- Refreshed Local Officer for care experienced young people

Next steps

- Training for professionals designed with Social Work Academy
- Implementation of ‘Listening Circles’ to support relationship building
- Enhanced offer at Kitcat Terrace – support and guidance

Education, enrichment, employment & training

Priorities

- Delivering consistent support to maintain education & access opportunities
- Increasing apprenticeship opportunities - right type and level
- Functional skills training (Maths & English)
- Improving availability and awareness of travel concessions

Progress

- 75% of children in our care (for 1 year +) making expected progress in M&E
- ETE Advisors support overcoming barriers to opportunities
- Support with travel costs and ongoing campaigning

Next steps

- Learning Hub to provide more face to face support:
  - rolling programmes, including functional Maths & English)
  - expansion to additional providers e.g. National Careers Service
- Virtual School to operate as ‘all through’ college – subject to funding

Health and wellbeing

Priorities

- Improving communication between health professionals & young people
- Development of young peoples’ Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme
- Development of mindfulness and mind & body support and information

Progress

- Quality assurance of health assessments ensuring voice of the child captured
- Improved multi-professional relationships through the Steering Group
- CAMHS in Social Care Team support to children living in and out of borough

Next steps

- Health pathways, guidelines & services refer to young people’s priorities
- CLICC and partners to develop Emotional Wellbeing Champions Pilot
- Local health profile and health passports – improved insight and service provision

**Appendix A: Membership list for the Corporate Parenting Board (including officers who also report to the board)**

Name	Job Title / Organisation	Name	Job Title / Organisation
Samantha Anderson	Young Carers Engagement Officer, Young People Services, LBTH	Farhan Hoque	Young People's Co-ordinator, Young People Services, LBTH
Susannah Beasley-Murray	Director, Supporting People, LBTH	Asma Islam	Councillor
Asma Begum	Chair of the CPB and Cabinet Member for Children and Schools ( <i>note: changes following the election in 2022 to come</i> )	Reagender Kang	Designated Nurse for CLA, NHS NEL CCG
Robert Bielby	Head of Family Support & Protection, LBTH	Leo Major	Head of CLA and Through Care Services
Vicky Clark	Divisional Director, Growth and Economic Development, LBTH	Lissa-Marie Minnis	Head of Children's Regulated Services and Resources, LBTH
Peter Cox	CAMHS in Social Care Team Lead, LBTH	Edosa Obunge	Through Care Service, LBTH
David Cregan	Headteacher Virtual School, LBTH	Geraldine O'Donnell	Head of Service Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, LBTH
Pam Cummins	Business Support, LBTH	Shirley Quarshie-Dunne	IRO Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, LBTH
David Edgar	Councillor	Tracy Stanley	Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture, LBTH
Hasan Faruq	Youth Participation & Engagement Manage, Young People Services, LBTH	Ann Sutcliffe	Corporate Director, Place, LBTH
Foster Care Representatives		James Thomas	Director of Children and Culture, LBTH
Amanda Harcus / Diane Lomas	HR Representatives, LBTH	Karlijn Tummers	Interim Senior Commissioning Manager Children and Young People, LBTH
Vicky Clark	Divisional Director, Growth and Economic Development, LBTH	Val Whitehead	Councillor
Young People's Representatives	Children in Care Council		

## Appendix B – CPB Meetings and Agendas 2021/22

MEETING	KEY AGENDA ITEMS
Standing Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update from Foster Care Representatives</li> <li>• Update from Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)</li> <li>• Performance Report</li> </ul>
January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Best Practice</li> <li>• Update on Apprenticeship Opportunities</li> </ul>
April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Care Leavers App</li> <li>• Draft Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan 2122</li> <li>• Local Planning and Implementation Group for Lifelong Links</li> <li>• Adopt London East - Performance and Service Development Report</li> </ul>
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> <li>• SEND Improvement Programme – progress update</li> <li>• Care Review &amp; Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) Sounding Board</li> <li>• Foster Care Recruitment</li> </ul>
October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt London East Annual Report 2021</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> </ul>
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Offer for Care Leavers 2022</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> <li>• TNW CCGs Safeguarding Annual Report 2020/2021</li> </ul>

## Appendix C – Children's Social Care Key Performance Indicator Report Extract April 2022

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Overview</b>					
Number of Children Looked After	307	306	<b>335</b>	338	Snapshot
Number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)				63	Snapshot
Children Looked After (CLA) - rate per 10,000	43.3	43.1	<b>45.2</b>	45.6	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Looked After Children</b>					
No of new Children Looked After (CLA) episodes in period	151	131	<b>186</b>	17	YTD
No. of Children Looked After (CLA) exits in period	172	131	<b>161</b>	12	YTD
% repeat Children Looked After (CLA) (entries that were re-entries within 2 years)	6.0%	2.3%	<b>2.7%</b>	0%	YTD
Average no. of placement moves	1.6	1.5	<b>1.6</b>	1.6	Rolling Year
Max. no of placement moves	6.0	5.0	<b>8.0</b>	9.0	Rolling Year
% Children Looked After (CLA) long term placement stability	71.6%	73.1%	<b>64.8%</b>	64.0%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) with a named Social Worker (key worker or personal advisor)	100.0%	100.0%	<b>100%</b>	100%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) entries with health assessment done within 20 days	82.0%	91.5%	<b>45.7%</b>	25%	YTD
% of Children Looked After (CLA) who had an annual Health check (children looked after for at least 12 months)	78.7%	86.0%	<b>97.3%</b>	97.3%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) who had an annual Dental check (children looked after for at least 12 months)	83.1%	60.0%	<b>82.1%</b>	78.4%	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Section 6 - Care Leavers</b>					
% allocated care leavers "in touch" (17,18,19,20,21 yr. olds with activity updated within last year)	95.7%	98.8%	<b>88.9%</b>	90.4%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers 'in touch' and known to be EET	67.3%	72.6%	<b>64.3%</b>	66.3%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers 'in touch' and known to be in suitable accommodation	91.4%	95.8%	<b>83.6%</b>	85.9%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers with a pathway plan	98.8%	98.2%	<b>96.9%</b>	97.2%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers with pathway plan updated in last 6 months	96.7%	95.6%	<b>87.5%</b>	90.0%	Snapshot

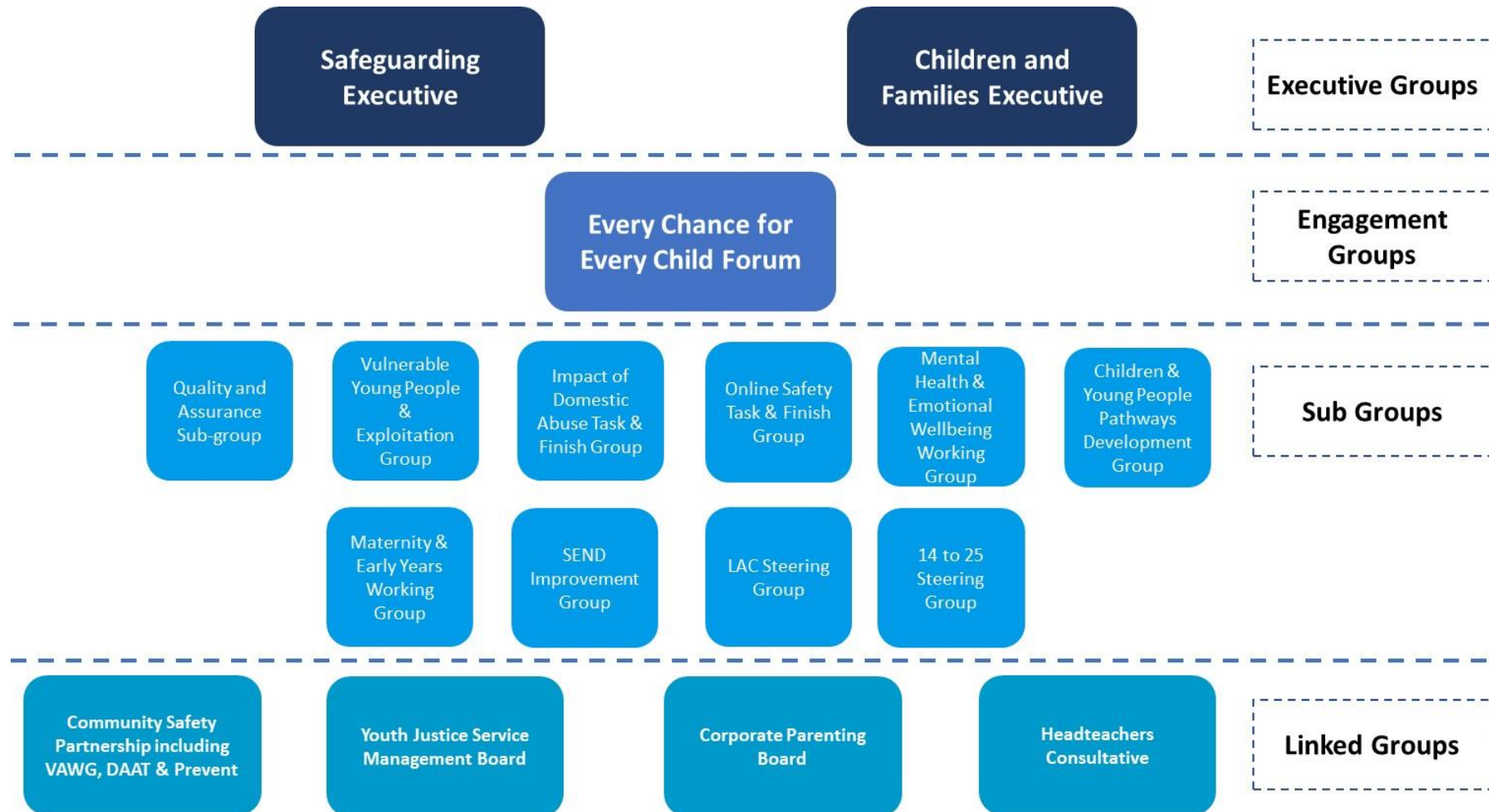
Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Missing Children</b>					
Number of missing children during period	276	210	<b>205</b>	35	YTD
Missing from home	176	141	<b>156</b>	15	YTD
Children Looked After (out of borough)	73	41	<b>39</b>	16	YTD
Children Looked After (in borough)	16	15	<b>15</b>	6	YTD

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Fostering and Adoption</b>					
Number of Foster Carer Enquiries (initial contact)	95	193	<b>240</b>	4	YTD
No. of Foster Carer Enquiries leading to Initial Visits	48	53	<b>44</b>	0	YTD
% Initial visits completed within 5 working days	75.0%	44.2%	<b>46.2%</b>	0%	YTD
Total Approved Foster Carers (excl. family & friends, staying put, on hold/unavailable)	97	116	<b>113</b>	116	Snapshot
Foster Carer Vacancy rate	23.7%	45.3%	<b>21.1%</b>	21.7%	Snapshot
Foster Carer Occupancy rate	75.3%	54.7%	<b>78.9%</b>	78.3%	Snapshot
No. of children placed with In-house Foster Carers	115	109	<b>116</b>	116	Snapshot
No. of children in Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) Placements	92	85	<b>72</b>	73	Snapshot
Children in Residential Placements (incl dual registered schools and mother & baby units)	30	27	<b>22</b>	25	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Fostering and Adoption (continued)</b>					
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	376.3	432.3	<b>509.5</b>	553.8	YTD (3 years)
Average time between court authority to place a child and deciding on a match	164	245	<b>300</b>	-	YTD
% waiting less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their family (14 months)	46.2%	36.1%	<b>35.7%</b>	37.5%	Snapshot
Adoptions from care (number adopted and percentage leaving care who are adopted)	6.4%	6.1%	<b>8.7%</b>	8.3%	YTD
Number of Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders granted for Looked After Children (S)	37	17	<b>18</b>	2	YTD
The percentage of black and minority ethnic children leaving care who are adopted	4.4%	3.9%	<b>7.1%</b>	9.1%	YTD
The percentage of children who ceased to be looked after because of an SGO	15.1%	8.4%	<b>2.5%</b>	8.3%	YTD
Percentage of Children Looked After (CLA) placed for adoption within 12 months of agency decision	91%	87.5%	<b>50.0%</b>	100%	YTD

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current – Autumn 2020/21	Period
<b>Virtual School</b>					
% of pupils making expected progress in English and Maths	56.0%	62.0%	<b>67.5%</b>	68%	Termly
% of pupils where a Pupil Education Plans (PEP) meeting took place in the term	93.0%	95.0%	<b>96.3%</b>	96%	Termly
% of Pupil Education Plans (PEPs) which were signed off and RAG rated green	73.0%	91.0%	<b>78.1%</b>	78%	Termly

Appendix D – Tower Hamlets Partnership Structures





Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Council</b>  Wednesday, 27 July 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Open (Unrestricted)
<b>Administrative Matters, Committee Chairs, Member Allowances Scheme</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	(All Wards);

### Executive Summary

This report is presented to Council to allow agreement for a couple of administrative matters relating to Council powers.

Firstly, the report asks Council to agree to the appointment of a Chair of the Audit Committee and secondly, it asks for agreement in relation to a couple of small amendments to the Member Allowances Scheme.

### Recommendations:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Agree a Chair of the Audit Committee following nominations received at the meeting.
2. To agree to the following amendments to the Member Allowances Scheme:
  - a. To remove the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chief Whip
  - b. To agree the amendment set out in Paragraph 3.7 clarifying the definition of a Co-opted Member in relation to the Member Allowances Scheme.

### 1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council has responsibility for these decisions.

### 2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Council may nominate any Non-Executive Member as the Chair of the Audit Committee.

- 2.2 Council can decide not to agree the proposed changes to the Member Allowances Scheme.

### **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Council has responsibility for the matters outlined in this report and is asked to make determinations as appropriate.

#### Chair of the Audit Committee

- 3.2 Councillor Abdul Malik was nominated as Chair of the Audit Committee at the Annual Council meeting. However, Councillor Malik is not able to take up the position and declined the appointment.
- 3.3 Council are therefore asked to make a new appointment. At its meeting on 28 June 2022, the Audit Committee appointed Councillor Jahed Choudhury as its Chair for the meeting. This nomination will therefore be proposed to Council to agree as the permanent Chair. However, Council is free to make an appointment as it sees fit by nominating other Members.
- 3.4 If the agreed Chair is not a current Member of the Audit Committee, then they will need to be appointed by the relevant Group with one existing Member being removed.

#### Member Allowances Scheme

- 3.5 At the Annual Council meeting it was suggested that the Chief Whip Special Responsibility Allowance should be removed from the Member Allowances Scheme. This report therefore asks Council to make a determination on whether it should formally be removed from the Scheme.
- 3.6 Finally, the new Member Code of Conduct (which came into force on 6 May 2022) has a new specific definition of a Co-optee for the benefit of the Code of Conduct which was considered important given the increasing variety of types of Members on Committees. To avoid confusion, it is proposed to amend the Member Allowances Scheme to refer to the same definition in relation to allowances.
- 3.7 Therefore, it is proposed that the following sentence under Part C Section 39 Paragraph 32 (Interpretation):

“Co-opted Member” means any person who is not a Councillor but who sits on a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of the Council”

be amended to read:

“A Co-opted Member refers to persons who are not Councillors but who sit on a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of the Council. The exact definition to

be used in this scheme is that set out in the Member Code of Conduct (Constitution, Part C, Section 31)”

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None arising from this report.

#### **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 Nil items.

#### **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.1 The 2022-23 budget for Member Allowances is £1,183k. The removal of the Chief Whip Special Responsibility Allowance would result in an expenditure saving of £12k.

#### **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to arrange for discharge of its functions by a committee. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 require appointments to committees to reflect the representation of different groups in the authority as a whole.

7.2 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003 (“the Regulations”) require the local authority in each year to make a scheme in accordance with the Regulations. The Scheme must make provision for the payment of the basic allowance and specify the amount. The Regulations state that the local authority “may” make provision for the special responsibility allowance, but it is not obliged to do so.

7.3 In addition, Part B, Section 3 paragraph 4(a) of the Constitution gives Council authority to amend revoke or replace the Members' Allowance Scheme.

- 7.4 The matters set out in the report comply with the relevant legislation.
- 7.5 When considering the scheme, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010<sup>2</sup>, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not (the public sector equality duty).
- 

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- None.

### **Appendices**

- None.

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

#### **List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

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

- None.

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

N/A

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Council</b>  27 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Questions submitted by Members of the Council</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions that were submitted by Members of the Council for response by the Mayor, the Speaker or the Chair of a Committee or Sub-Committee at the Council meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022
2. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4, questions relating to Executive functions and decisions taken by the Mayor are put to the Mayor unless he delegates such a decision to another Member, who will therefore be responsible for answering the question. In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will answer questions directed to the Mayor.
3. Questions are limited to one per Member per meeting, plus one supplementary question unless the Member has indicated that only a written reply is required and in these circumstances a supplementary question is not permitted. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. Council Procedure Rule 10.7 provides for an answer to take the form of a written answer circulated to the questioner, a reference to a published work or a direct oral answer.
5. There is a time limit of thirty minutes at the Council meeting for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any questions not put within this time are dealt with by way of written responses.
6. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

## **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

22 questions have been received from Members of the Council as follows:-

### **11.1 Question from Councillor Jahed Choudhury**

Will the Mayor provide an update on how his Council plans to alleviate the current cost of living crisis on the residents of our borough, and any specific measures that have either been implemented or are likely to be implemented in the near future?

### **11.2 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam**

Further to the announcement of the re-opening of the Rushmere One Stop Shop, can the Mayor confirm whether this will be permanent to ensure it remains open for residents for the foreseeable future?

### **11.3 Question from Councillor Bodrul Choudhury**

Many families are having to make the choice between eating and heating, often to the detriment of the educational needs of our Borough's children. Will the Mayor clarify how his Council will be safeguarding our young people from the current crisis, both inside and outside of the classroom?

### **11.4 Question from Councillor Marc Francis**

Will the Mayor and Lead Member for Housing set out the actions he intends to take to ensure social landlords in Tower Hamlets that are underperforming in terms of housing management, repairs and accountability to residents are required to take decisive action to improve those services?

### **11.5 Question from Councillor Abdul Malik**

Mr Mayor, as poverty has increased, so too has crime and desperation. Many of our Borough's residents do not feel safe on their own streets. What strategy will his Council be adopting to ensure that our residents feel protected and secure?

### **11.6 Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah**

The Wapping bus gate has made a significant positive impact on Wapping, reducing noise, anti-social behaviour and long tailbacks of traffic through Wapping up to The Highway.

With residents being given an exemption, the scheme has been a success.

Can the Mayor outline his specific concerns regarding the Wapping bus gate that have sparked this recent consultation?

### **11.7 Question from Councillor Ahmodur Rahman Khan**

Mr Mayor, as I know you are aware, the D3 and D7 bus routes provide a lifeline to many of the poorest residents of our communities. They use these routes to get to work, to get their children to school and to move about the heart of our Borough. What is your administration doing to prevent the devastating impact that the closure of these routes would have on these residents?

### **11.8 Question from Councillor Rebeka Sultana**

I have been approached by residents in my ward to express their concerns about crime rates in the borough. The previous Labour administration provided funding to deliver a £3.1 million CCTV transformation programme, along with other initiatives to tackle crime in Tower Hamlets.

Can the Cabinet Member please give us an update on what the Council plans to do to build on this work to reduce crime in the borough?

### **11.9 Question from Councillor Amin Rahman**

A huge proportion of our borough rely on the ability to move around it quickly and unrestricted, be they delivery drivers or cabbies. Yet the Liveable streets programme has not only failed them economically – it is failing all our residents in terms of emissions, pollution and the subsequent health risks that follow. How will the Mayor combat this failed scheme, and what is his plan to make Tower Hamlets greener and cleaner while keeping our Borough moving?

### **11.10 Question from Councillor Mufeedah Bustin**

The Audit Committee provides oversight and challenge to the Finance, Internal Audit and Risk Management areas of the council and is a key governance aspect of the council's structure. Why has the Mayor and the Aspire Party voted to appoint the Lead Member for Resources as a voting member on the Audit Committee?

### **11.11 Question from Councillor Mustak Ahmed**

Truman Brewery: Could the Mayor and cabinet members please provide an update on the legal challenge to the plan to build a shopping mall on the site of the historic Truman Brewery in Brick Lane?

### **11.12 Question from Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury**

Residents have raised concerns with me about the Council's move from paper parking permits and visitors' scratch cards to an online form. As I am sure you will agree, there are a number of residents – especially those who are elderly and vulnerable – who do not have access to the internet and are therefore now unable apply for their parking permits.

Can the Cabinet Member describe what actions the Council will be taking to make parking in the borough accessible to all?

### **11.13 Question from Councillor Abdul Mannan**

Mr Mayor, for too long residents in our borough have been squeezed out of their homes by avaricious landlords, rising rent prices and a dearth of council and affordable housing. How are you ensuring that Tower Hamlets remains a Borough that values its proud history of welcoming all who enter it, and helping them to stay in decent, affordable housing?

### **11.14 Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussain**

Mr Speaker, the heritage of our borough is one of the richest and most diverse, not only in London, but in the whole of the UK. From Cable Street to Brick Lane, Stepney to the Isle of Dogs, we boast some of the most iconic landmarks in the country. I ask the Mayor,

how will his administration continue the conservation of these sites, while championing and rejuvenating older equivalents?

#### **11.15 Question from Councillor Abdul Wahid**

Mr Mayor, football plays a huge role in our Borough's daily life, with huge support for several London clubs and an excellent and healthy local sporting tradition. How will you use your time in office to harness this passion and provide our communities with a competitive yet unifying experience to express their love for the beautiful game?

#### **11.16 Question from Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled**

Mr Mayor, what will your administration be doing to bring our Borough's women closer to the heart of social, cultural and economic power during your first term?

#### **11.17 Question from Councillor Harun Miah**

Mr Speaker, in 2018, 137 languages were spoken in our Borough's schools. That is something that we as a local authority should be immensely proud of, and is a statistic that should be celebrated and championed, not shied away from. What will your Council be doing to encourage those children from multilingual homes to develop their mother tongues and further enrich the already deep cultural and linguistic diversity present in our Borough?

#### **11.18 Question from Councillor Ahmodul Kabir**

Council Tax Relief: Mr Mayor, Council Tax Relief is by definition help for those whose income is beneath a certain threshold. How will you rectify the unfair way in which self-employed residents have been denied relief by the previous Administration?

#### **11.19 Question from Councillor Bellal Uddin**

Mr Mayor, in rebuilding Tower hamlets and rebuilding our future, our Manifesto pledges to run a Council which listens to residents. Could you tell us which consultations are open or planned so we can encourage residents to give us their views?

#### **11.20 Question from Councillor Ana Miah**

Mr Mayor, Fairness and Equity is at the heart of our Manifesto, how will you ensure that our diverse communities are represented at all levels of the Council and not just in the lower ranks?

#### **11.21 Question from Councillor Nathalie Bienfait**

I'd like to bring to the attention of the Mayor serious safety concerns around traffic on Tredegar Road, Bow as well as the so-called Skew Bridge. The safety and health of residents living around these two locations are at daily risk because of a lack of pedestrian security features, narrow roadways causing dangerous driving and speeding and blind corners.

Residents' property has been repeatedly damaged by speeding vehicles around Skew Bridge; residents have to put up with daily arguments around the Tredegar/Coborn Roads junction due to the road not being wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass each other; pedestrians and cyclists using both areas are constantly at risk of serious injury.

What is the Mayor currently doing to improve safety at these two locations?



### **11.22 Question from Councillor Peter Golds**

The recently published 2021 census showed Tower Hamlets to be the fastest growing local authority in the country, with a population of 310,300. This is, however, lower than had been forecast or expected. This reduction of the estimated population will have an appreciable affect with regard to government grant aid which is based on population statistics. There is evidence that during the enumeration period many residents of Tower Hamlets, including students and young people, had gone elsewhere due to lockdown but have now returned.

Will the Mayor outline what discussions have been initiated on this subject between the council, government and other London Councils?

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