

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 1 MARCH 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received for the meeting.

Councillor Amina Ali and Councillor Mohammed Chowdhury joined the meeting online.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

The Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer advised that the Standards Advisory Committee had agreed a general dispensation to all Councillors in respect of matters relating to the Council Tax and also on Housing where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council. Members did not therefore have to declare a DPI in respect of these matters.

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

There were no announcements made by the Speaker or Chief Executive.

4. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were no petitions listed for consideration for this meeting.

5. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2023/24

Mayor Lutfur Rahman **moved**, the budget and council tax proposals of the Mayor and Executive as set out in the agenda pack and the Aspire Group's amendment set out in the supplementary agenda. Councillor Saied Ahmed **seconded** the proposals.

Councillor Marc Francis moved the Labour group amendment set out in the supplementary agenda, which was seconded by Councillor Sirajul Islam. Amendments proposed by Councillor Nathalie Bienfait for the Greens and Councillor Peter Golds, for the Conservatives were also considered who seconded each other's amendments.

Following debate, the amendments moved by Councillors Marc Francis, Nathalie Bienfait and Peter Golds were put to a recorded vote and were

rejected. The substantive Budget for 2023-24, including the administration amendment, the Council Tax Resolution and the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Statements and the Capital Report submitted by Mayor Lutfur Rahman were put to a recorded vote and were agreed.

DECISION:

Budget Motion: Revenue 2023-26 and Capital 2023-26

1. To note a General Fund Revenue Budget of £446.205m and approve a Council Tax (Band D) of £1,146.88 (Council share) for 2023-24 as set out in the motion and Council Tax Resolution attached at Annex 1 to this report. This incorporates a freeze to the Tower Hamlets element of Council Tax and to only levy a 2% Adult Social Care precept for 2023-24.
2. To note the GLA precept as set out in the Council Tax Resolution is subject to the approval of the GLA Assembly at their meeting scheduled for 23 February, any changes as a result of that meeting will be made known to Council before the date of this meeting.
3. To note the change in the budget report appendices to reflect the final Local Government Finance Settlement grant allocation for the Services Grant which was increased by £0.178m (Annex 2 Appendix 1A, 1B, 2 and 6).
4. To note the Capital Programme, Housing Revenue Account budget and Dedicated Schools budget. Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy 2023-24
5. To adopt the Treasury Management Strategy Statement set out in Annex 3 Appendix A attached to this report.
6. To adopt the Investment Strategy Report set out in Annex 3 Appendix B attached to this report.
7. To adopt the Capital Strategy Report (which incorporates the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement) set out in Annex 3 Appendix C attached to this report.

Section 25, Local Government Act 2003

8. To note the Section 151 officer's view on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, set out in section 2 of this report.

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS)

9. To note that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme will remain unchanged for 2023-24.

Administration budget amendment – Full Council 1 March 2023

This Council notes:

1. The draft budget considered by Cabinet on 25 January 2023 included the following two savings proposals:

Title	Reference	Directorate	Service Area	2023-24 £'000	2024-25 £'000	2025-26 £'000	Total £'000
Re-commissioning Hostel Support	SAV / HAC 001 / 23-24	Health, Adults and Community	Adult Social Care	(50)	(100)	(100)	(250)
Council-wide efficiencies	SAV / ALL 001 / 23-24	Cross-Directorate	Cross-Directorate	(743)	-	-	(743)

2. The administration has further considered the Re-commissioning Hostel Support saving and believes that the commissioning strategy will need to be thoroughly reviewed during 2023. To allow for this review, it is proposed that the £50k saving initially proposed for 2023-24 is removed from the Re-commissioning Hostel Support saving and added into the Council-wide efficiencies saving.
3. This does not alter the total sum of proposed savings and therefore does not impact the overall balanced budget or planned use of reserves. The revised savings would become:

Title	Reference	Directorate	Service Area	2023-24 £'000	2024-25 £'000	2025-26 £'000	Total £'000
Re-commissioning Hostel Support	SAV / HAC 001 / 23-24	Health, Adults and Community	Adult Social Care	-	(100)	(100)	(200)
Council-wide efficiencies	SAV / ALL 001 / 23-24	Cross-Directorate	Cross-Directorate	(793)	-	-	(793)

This Council Resolves:

1. That the £50k saving for 2023-24 is removed from the Re-commissioning Hostel Support saving and added into the Council-wide efficiencies saving.

BUDGET COUNCIL
1 MARCH 2023
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT 2023-24

That Council:

1. Approve the Council Tax Resolution, detailed in Appendix A to this motion.
2. Agree a General Fund revenue budget of £446.205m and a Council Tax Requirement for Tower Hamlets in 2023-24 of £129.541m.
3. Agree the Council's 2023-24 Budget Report and 2023-26 Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Annex 2.
4. Agree the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy Report and Capital Strategy Report for 2023-24 set out in Annex 3.

Appendix A

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
COUNCIL 1 MARCH 2023
COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION**

1. That the revenue estimates for 2023-24 be approved.
2. That it be noted that, at its meeting on 4 January 2023, Cabinet agreed 112,950 as its **Council Tax base** for the year 2023-24 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]
3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the council for the year 2023-24 in accordance with Section 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended and the Local Authorities (Alteration of Requisite Calculations) (England) Regulations 2011:
 - a) £1,428,682,281 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of The Act. [**Gross Expenditure**]
 - b) £1,299,142,185 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of The Act. [**Gross Income**]
 - c) £129,540,096 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of The Act, as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of The Act). [**Council Tax Requirement**]
 - d) £1,146.88 Being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of The Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. [**Council Tax**]
4. Being the amount given by multiplying the amount at 3(d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of The Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of The Act, as the amount to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands. **Tower Hamlets Council Tax:**

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£764.59	£892.01	£1,019.45	£1,146.88	£1,401.75	£1,656.60	£1,911.47	£2,293.76
5. That it be noted that for the year 2023-24 the **Greater London Authority (GLA)** has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£289.43	£337.66	£385.90	£434.14	£530.62	£627.09	£723.57	£868.28
6. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 4 and 5 above, the council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of **Council Tax for the year 2023-24** for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£1,054.02	£1,229.67	£1,405.35	£1,581.02	£1,932.37	£2,283.69	£2,635.04	£3,162.04

7. That the council hereby determines in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-24 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. As the billing authority, the council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-24 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Action by: Caroline Holland, Interim Corporate Director (Resources)

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Speaker **MOVED** and Councillor Talukdar **seconded** the motion to exclude the press and public for the remaining part of the meeting and AGREE a 5- minute adjournment to clear the public gallery.

Council

RESOLVED

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

7. AGREEMENT OF A SPECIAL SEVERANCE PAYMENT

Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled, Chair of the General Purposes Committee introduced the report which set out the process for agreeing a Special Severance Payment for the outgoing Chief Executive.

Members asked questions of the independent panel and the external consultant before the recommendations were put to a vote.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

1. Review and note the response of the Independent Panel;
2. Agree the special severance payment to the outgoing Chief Executive.

8. AGREEING INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled, Chair of the General Purposes Committee introduced the report and asked members to note the process and proposals for agreeing the interim Chief Executive arrangements until the recruitment of a permanent replacement could be concluded.

Following debate, the Council **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the report and minutes of the General Purposes Committee of 23rd February 2023.
2. Agree that Stephen Halsey be appointed as the Council's Interim Chief Executive on the job description set out in the Appendix to the cover report.
3. Agree that this includes appointment to the designations of:
 - a) Head of Paid Services
 - b) Electoral Returning Officer
 - c) Electoral Registration Officer
4. That the above arrangements apply until such time as the Council appoints a permanent Chief Executive.

The meeting ended at 10.41 p.m.