

Cabinet



Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at 5.30 p.m.

Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel

Agenda

Mayor Lutfur Rahman

Cabinet Members

Councillor Maium Talukdar	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Equalities and Social Inclusion)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	(Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	(Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Growth)
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Kabir Hussain	(Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency)

[The quorum for Cabinet is 3 Members]

Further Information

Reports for consideration, meeting contact details, public participation and more information on Cabinet decision-making is available on the following pages.



Public Information

Viewing or Participating in Cabinet Meetings

The public are welcome to attend meetings of the Cabinet. Procedures relating to Public Engagement are set out in the 'Guide to Cabinet' attached to this agenda. Except where any exempt/restricted documents are being discussed, the public are welcome to view this meeting through the Council's webcast system.

Physical Attendance at the Town Hall is also welcome, however, seating is limited and offered on a first come, first served basis. **Please note** that you may be filmed in the background as part of the Council's filming of the meeting.

Meeting Webcast

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<http://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Contact for further enquiries:

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A Guide to CABINET

Decision Making at Tower Hamlets

As Tower Hamlets operates the Directly Elected Mayor system, **Mayor Lutfur Rahman** holds Executive powers and takes decisions at Cabinet or through Individual Mayoral Decisions. The Mayor has appointed nine Councillors to advise and support him and they, with him, form the Cabinet. Their details are set out on the front of the agenda.

Which decisions are taken by Cabinet?

Executive decisions are all decisions that aren't specifically reserved for other bodies (such as Development or Licensing Committees). In particular, Executive Key Decisions are taken by the Mayor either at Cabinet or as Individual Mayoral Decisions.

The constitution describes Key Decisions as an executive decision which is likely

- a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, above £1million; or
- b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the borough.

Upcoming Key Decisions are published on the website on the 'Forthcoming Decisions' page through www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee

Published Decisions and Call-Ins

Once the meeting decisions have been published, any 5 Councillors may submit a Call-In to the Service Head, Democratic Services requesting that a decision be reviewed. This halts the decision until it has been reconsidered.

- The decisions will be published on: **Friday, 26 May 2023**
- The deadline for call-ins is: **Monday, 5 June 2023**

Any Call-Ins will be considered at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee can reject the call-in or they can agree it and refer the decision back to the Mayor, with their recommendations, for his final consideration.

Public Engagement at Cabinet

The main focus of Cabinet is as a decision-making body. However there is an opportunity for the public to contribute through making submissions that specifically relate to the reports set out on the agenda.

Members of the public may make written submissions in any form (for example; Petitions, letters, written questions) to the Clerk to Cabinet (details on the previous page) by 5 pm the day before the meeting.

Cabinet

Wednesday, 24 May 2023

5.30 p.m.

Pages

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There will be an opportunity (up to 15 minutes) for members of the public to put questions to the Mayor and Cabinet Members before the Cabinet commences its consideration of the substantive business set out in the agenda.

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. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

11 - 16

The unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 April 2023 are presented for approval.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to unrestricted business to be considered.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(Under provisions of Section 30, Rule 59 of the Constitution).

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1	Tower Hamlets Healthier Advertising Policy	17 - 26
	<p>Report Summary: Tower Hamlets has very high levels of child excess weight. Evidence shows that advertisements for unhealthy food and drink products directly and indirectly impact what we eat. Young people who recall seeing junk food adverts every day are more likely to be obese. The paper considers how we can protect children and young people from the advertising of unhealthy food and drinks (foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar), in order to contribute towards our priority to promote children's healthy weight and healthy life expectancy. This is part of a wider programme of work to support child healthy weight in the borough.</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care Corporate Priority: Invest in public services</p>	
6.2	Response to Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Recommendations on Increasing Female Sports Participation	27 - 52
	<p>Report Summary: This is a proposed response to the Overview and Scrutiny recommendations on Increasing women and girls' participation in sports provision and physical activities</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation Corporate Priority: Boost culture, business, jobs and leisure</p>	



6 .3 Recommendations for the delivery of Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) to all Secondary School Pupils 53 - 78

Report Summary:

In May 2022 Mayor Rahman made a manifesto pledge to provide Universal Free School Meals (UFSM's) to all KS3 & KS4 Secondary Pupils. This commitment has since been reflected in LBTH's Strategic Plan 2022-26 with implementation from September 2023.

This report sets out the recommendations for the delivery of Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) to all Secondary School Pupils.

Wards: All Wards
Lead Member: Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Corporate Priority: Accelerate Education

6 .4 Record of Corporate Directors Actions 2022/23 Q4 79 - 84

Report Summary:

This report sets out, for noting by Cabinet, the Corporate Director's Actions taken under Rule 10 (section 50 Record of Corporate Director's Actions (RCDA) - Waiving of Procurement Procedures) in Part C – Codes and Protocols of the Council's constitution.

The section states that Corporate Director's Actions in respect of contracts over £100,000 must be reported to Cabinet for noting and this report fulfils this requirement.

Wards: All Wards
Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living
Corporate Priority: All Priorities

6 .5 Housing Capital Strategy 2023/24: Delivering at pace to increase the supply of new homes To Follow

Report Summary:

The three-year Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2023-26 of £389.625m, of which £311.357m is allocated to the new council homes programme, was approved by Full Council on 1st March 2023.

The available budget has been allocated to the named schemes, which form the Approved Housing Capital Programme and is expected to deliver 1,080 new homes. However, there is a pipeline of further schemes that is currently unfunded.

This report sets out the approach to enabling the delivery of new homes on the currently unfunded sites, through alternative delivery routes, to ensure that supply of new homes continues to be increased at pace to address overcrowding and the high levels of housing need in the borough.

Wards: All Wards

Tower Hamlets Council
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BJ

Lead Member:	Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding
Corporate Priority:	Homes for the future

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Should the Mayor in Cabinet consider it necessary, it is recommended that the following motion be adopted to allow consideration of any exempt/restricted documents.

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

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (PINK)

The Exempt / Confidential (Pink) Committee papers in the Agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 .1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to exempt/confidential business to be considered.

10 .2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(Under provisions of Section 30, Rule 59 of the Constitution).

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION



12. **ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS
CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

Next Meeting of Cabinet:

Wednesday, 21 June 2023 at 5.30 p.m. in Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel



The best of London in one borough

Tower Hamlets Council
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BJ

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 Interim Monitoring Officer, Tel: 020 7364 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 CABINET

HELD AT 5.40 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present in Person:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	
Councillor Maium Talukdar	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Equalities and Social Inclusion)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	(Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	(Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Growth)

Officers Present in Person:

Stephen Halsey	(Interim Chief Executive)
Janet Fasan	(Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer)
Matthew Eady	(Director of Commissioning and Culture)
Susannah Beasley-Murray	(Divisional Director of Supporting Families)
Ann Corbett	(Director, Community Safety)
Kelly Duggan	HOS Youth Justice & Young People's Service • LBTH - Childrens Services
Sharon Godman	(Director, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation)
Jack Kerr	Strategy & Policy Manager
Ann Sutcliffe	(Corporate Director, Place)
Joel West	(Democratic Services Team Leader (Committee))
Matthew Pullen	(Infrastructure Planning Manager)
Michele Young	(Principal Development Coordinator)

Officers In Attendance Virtually:

William Jabang	(Senior Procurement Manager)
Caroline Holland	(Interim Corporate Director, Resources)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Kabir Hussain
- Councillor Iqbal Hossain

- James Thomas, Corporate Director Children and Culture (Susannah Beasley Murray, Director Supporting Families was deputising).

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

None.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 29 March 2023 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of proceedings.

Add note from Steve H on grants – get from Sharon/Lynne

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

Stephen Halsey, Chief Executive, made the following announcement regarding the Mayor's community grants programme:

At the last Cabinet meeting the Mayor and Cabinet approved the new Grants policy and outcomes framework for the voluntary and community sector. As part of that is agreed to establish a Mayors community grants programme. This is a three-and-a-half-year program, with an annual budget of £3.5million. The new programme will address the needs of our community and provide funding projects to achieve the objectives in the Strategic Plan., namely tackling the cost of living crisis, accelerating education, promoting culture, business jobs and skills, investing in public services, empowering communities and fighting crime.

I am pleased to announce that this programme was launched on Monday, 24 April. The deadline of grants application is 12 noon on 5 June. Organisations can apply for up to five projects across all themes and a maximum of £40,000 per annum for each project. We have produced a detailed prospectus and guidance which is available through our website. There is also support available for organisations, including three information sessions which will take place on Wednesday 26 April in the Council Chamber, Friday 5 May online and Thursday, 11 May at the Reach Community Hub, Blackwall. There will be a range of support from the Council for the voluntary services including group workshops and one to support for organisations. We want to make sure our grants programme reaches a wide range of organisations, and I would encourage Members to help us promote this amongst local groups in their area.

Further details are available via the Members Hub and Members Bulletin and on our website. As confirmed at last Cabinet meeting, the decision-making on grants allocations has been delegated to me, and

my decision will be published, which is expected to be around third week August.

We will also take a noting reports to the Grants Determination Sub Committee and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September. This process is subject to advice from counsel, who the Council is working with to clarify some remaining points. We will provide further update at the next Cabinet meeting.

Cabinet will also be aware that at the last meeting I was given delegated authority to be able to extend existing grants in the existing grants programme by up to one month. Having considered the current timelines and representations, I have taken decisions to extend the current local community funded projects and the infrastructure and capacity building grant with a new end date of 31 October 2023. This means the Mayor's community grants programme will commence from 1 November 2023 to 31 March, 2027. Officers will write to relevant organisations to confirm this decision.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Nil items.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Youth Investment Report

Councillor Maium Talukdar (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor) introduced the report that proposed a major investment in the Youth Service which would deliver a transformation in the level of support available young people and a diverse range of youth work opportunities and support through the delivery of a high-quality youth service. Councillor Talukdar explained how he hoped the proposals would help to produce the community leaders of tomorrow.

Susannah Beasley-Murray (Divisional Director of Supporting Families) and Kelly Duggan (HOS Youth Justice & Young People's Service) provided further detail of the proposals included in the report.

The Cabinet discussed the report and made the following points:

- The planned work would help to overturn under investment in youth provision by the previous administration.

- Youth investment would help the Council's wider aspirations to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- The demography of the borough, especially an increasing and increasingly dense population, necessitated enhanced access to youth services.
- Proposals would also provide welcome jobs and training and development opportunities for local people

The Mayor welcomed the proposals. He explained how he feels he was a product of the youth service, recounting how respectable and relatable youth workers influenced mentored and influenced his younger-self. He noted the significant additional investment in the service proposed, which totalled nearly £14million. He also stressed that the Council would continue work with schools and other youth providers as it did currently.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Endorses the proposed youth service operating model.
2. Agrees to implement and operationalise the model.

6.2 Contracts Forward Plan 2022/23 - Quarter 4

Councillor Saied Ahmed (Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living) introduced the report that set out a forward plan of supply and service contracts over £1m in value, or capital works contracts over £5m for quarter four of the 22/23 financial year. Councillor Ahmed summarised each of the proposed contracts from the report.

The Mayor and Cabinet stressed that, further to previous directions, all new contracts must have 10% overall weighting in the tender evaluation process.

The Mayor welcomed the report. Further to the vehicle lease contract summary, he asked officers to explore options to ensure school buses can enter estates to make collection and drop-off points convenient for parents and pupils.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Notes the contract summary at Appendix 1 to the report.
2. Authorises the appropriate Corporate Director in consultation with the Mayor to award those contracts set out in Appendix 1 to the report and not identified in accordance with recommendation 1 and following an appropriate procurement exercise
3. Authorises the Director Legal Services (Monitoring Office) to execute all necessary contract documents in respect of the awards of contract referred to at resolution 2 above subject to an appropriate award decision being achieved in accordance with resolutions 1 and 2 above.

4. Notes the procurement forward plan 2022-2027 schedule detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

6.3 Adoption of the Code of Construction Practice 2023

Councillor Kabir Ahmed (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding) introduced the report that set out the Council's expectations on the operations and logistics planning of construction sites within the borough. Ensuring the safety of the public and workers navigating the public realm surrounding active sites and the adequate mitigation of any adverse impacts including noise, dust and traffic issues.

The Mayor welcomed the report and the safeguards that adoption of the code would provide for residents whilst allowing crucial construction and investment to take place.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the Code of Construction Practice (2023) for adoption, authorise officers to prepare an adoption statement and withdraw the current Code of Construction Practice (2006).
2. To authorise the Corporate Director of Place to make any necessary factual or minor editing changes prior to publishing the final Code of Construction Practice (2023).
3. To note the Equalities Impact Analysis Screening Tool as summarised in Paragraph 4 of the report (and included in Appendix C to the report).
4. To note the Consultation Statement summarising representations received during the public consultation and the responses to these representations as set out in Appendix D to the report.

6.4 Equality Policy Refresh

Councillor Suluk Ahmed (Cabinet Member for Equalities and Social Inclusion) introduced the report that set out a refreshed equality policy (2023-27) for the council. The refreshed policy reflected the council's priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan 2022-26 and outlines how the equality policy is at core of all council business and applies to all aspects of the council's function. Councillor Ahmed explained the policy also applies to all groups who might face discrimination, including care-leavers.

The Cabinet noted the report and made the following points:

The policy builds on a proud local history of promoting and celebrating diversity and tackling intolerance.

The addition of faith and trade union groups was welcome.

The Mayor welcomed the report and expressed his thanks to all members and officers involved in producing the proposed policy. He asked that an appropriate communications strategy be developed to support the policy's implementation.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Agrees the council's Equality Policy 2023-27.

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

None.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

None.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

None.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

10.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION


Nil items.

12. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 6.25 p.m.

Chair, Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Cabinet

<p>Cabinet report</p> <p>24 May 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Warwick Tomsett, Acting Corporate Director for Health Adults and Community</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Tower Hamlets Healthier Advertising Policy</p>	

Lead Member	Health, Wellbeing and Social Care
Originating Officer(s)	Katy Scammell, Associate Director of Public Health Natalie Lovell, Public Health Programme Manager
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	28/03/2023
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 5: Investing in public services. Outcome: Implement a borough-wide healthy child weight programme

Executive Summary

- This paper provides detail on the proposal to introduce a healthier advertising policy in Tower Hamlets to restrict the advertising of unhealthy food and drink products. This policy is part of a much larger programme of work to promote child healthy weight in the borough and will contribute towards the council's priority to promote child healthy weight and reduce health inequalities.
- The healthier advertising policy will restrict the advertising of products high in fat, salt and sugar on all Council-owned estates, assets and through our procured advertising service contracts.
- This policy is seeking to restrict adverts for unhealthy foods and drinks that are often targeted at children and adults living in areas of deprivation, who are more likely to experience health inequalities.
- This policy is supported by local residents who were consulted in a number of different ways (as outlined in the report), and included young people, parents and businesses.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note this paper and the proposed healthier advertising policy.
2. Approve the healthier advertising policy to be adopted by the council.

2 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- Tower Hamlets has high rates of childhood obesity. Over 1 in 5 children in Reception have excess weight (meaning they are overweight or very overweight). This more than doubles by Year 6, where over 2 in 5 children have excess weight.ⁱ There are also significant inequalities in child excess weight levels, with higher rates reported in children from low socio-economic groups and from minority ethnic backgrounds.ⁱⁱ
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets have committed in the Strategic Plan to implement a borough-wide child healthy weight programme, recognising that many actions are needed to address this complex issue. This policy will form part of this programme of work.
- Advertisements for unhealthy food and drink products directly and indirectly impact what we eat.ⁱⁱⁱ Being exposed to foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) is linked to a preference for HFSS products^{iv}, more snacking^v, and consuming more calories^{vi}. Young people who recall seeing junk food adverts every day are more likely to be obese.^{vii}
- HFSS advertising widens health inequalities and may counter Public Health efforts to tackle health inequalities within deprived areas and/or areas with high levels of obesity. Both children and adults from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to be exposed to advertisements for HFSS foods.^{viii ix} Research also suggests that ethnic minority groups have a higher likelihood of exposure to food marketing outdoors.^x Alongside barriers to affording and accessing healthy food, HFSS advertising magnifies the problem. It does so by normalising unhealthy diets and contributes to a strong link between child obesity and deprivation.^{xi}
- An independent evaluation of the Transport for London (TfL) healthier advertising policy advertising led to reductions in the purchases of unhealthy foods including 20% reductions in sugary foods.^{xii}
- Modelling conducted by researchers at the University of Sheffield found the TfL advertising policy reduces obesity and cardiovascular disease in all people, with larger benefits for those living in the most deprived communities.^{xiii} The same researchers have estimated that if Tower Hamlets implemented the healthier advertising policy it could lead to 4,117 fewer people (adults) with

obesity and 2,133 fewer people being overweight by 12 months of the policy being implemented (rate is per 100,000). They have also estimated there could be 124 fewer cases of diabetes and 83 fewer cases of heart disease and stroke by 3 years of the policy being implemented. In Tower Hamlets, a healthier advertising policy is likely to have a positive impact particularly among residents from minority ethnic backgrounds, among whom certain health conditions, such as child excess weight^{xiv} and Type 2 diabetes^{xv}, are more prevalent.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- The following options are available:
 - Option 1: Implement the healthier advertising policy as outlined in this paper with a focus on High Fat Salt Sugar products. Following a robust evidence review, consideration may be given to extending the policy to also include alcohol, tobacco and other products, including e-cigarettes/vaping and breast milk substitutes.
 - Option 2: No healthier advertising policy implemented.

4 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Improving healthy weight levels

- Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan (2022-26) commits to implementing a borough-wide child healthy weight programme, recognising the high rates of unhealthy weight across the borough.
- Given the cause of obesity is complex and multi-factorial, the borough is taking a wide number of actions to address the issue. These actions are set out in the Tower Hamlets Child Healthy Weight Action Plan, which prioritises action across three key domains; healthy settings (including health promotion in schools and school meals); healthy services (child healthy weight pathway redesign); and healthy places (spatial planning, play, and advertising). Tackling unhealthy advertising is one of these actions, given the evidence that exposure to unhealthy food advertisements increases food intake in children and is associated with obesity. This aligns with the World Health Organisation's recommendation to prevent the advertisement of HFSS products.

The proposed advertising policy

- The healthier advertising policy will restrict the advertising of HFSS products from all Council owned estates; assets; and through our procured advertising service contracts.
- Some main features of the policy are outlined below:

- Swapping out products not banning products - No brand is banned. Under the policy, any food and drink company can advertise. They simply need to advertise a non HFSS product.
- The Nutrient Profiling Model - The Nutrient Profiling Model will be used to distinguish between food and non-alcoholic drinks which are HFSS and non HFSS using their nutritional content per 100g.
- Brand only advertising - Some brands have strong associations with unhealthy products. Because of this, advertising for food and drink brands is also restricted. All adverts for a food and drink brand must include prominent promotion of a non-HFSS product.
- Incidentals - All adverts which include foods and drinks that are generally HFSS are restricted. This includes those who don't advertise a HFSS product but do feature it. For example, a financial services advert featuring an ice cream.

Other areas to include in the healthier advertising policy

- Many local authorities are taking the opportunity to restrict other areas within the advertising policy such as alcohol, tobacco and related products, including e-cigarettes/vaping and breast milk substitutes. This will be considered at a later date.

Advertising is effective

- Advertisements for unhealthy food and drink products directly and indirectly impact what we eat. Being exposed to foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar is linked to a preference for HFSS products, more snacking, and consuming more calories. Young people who recall seeing junk food adverts every day are more likely to be obese.
- A lot of advertising is for unhealthy products. The advertising spend for cakes, biscuits, confectionary and ice creams is twenty times that of healthy food. In Tower Hamlets, research conducted by officers investigated the amount and type of adverts within a 200m radius of selected schools in Tower Hamlets. 369 adverts were identified and of the adverts promoting food and non-alcoholic beverages, 68% of these were classified as HFSS products.

Impact of the Transport for London advertising policy

- In February 2019, a restriction on junk food advertising on Transport for London (TfL) network was introduced in line with the London Mayor's commitment to the London Food Strategy. It has been implemented across the whole TfL estate, including the Underground, buses, Overground, Docklands Light Railway, taxi wraps and all TfL owned bus stops.
- An independent evaluation of TfL's policy found there has been an estimated 6.7 per cent decrease in average weekly household purchases of energy from HFSS

products, and the average weekly purchases of chocolate and sweets fell by 19.4 per cent. This equates to a 1000 calorie decrease in energy from unhealthy food purchases in Londoners' weekly shopping.

- Further research shows that TfL's policy has had a positive effect on prevention of obesity and diet-related diseases for almost 100,000 Londoners, especially those living in more deprived areas. This research suggests it has led to 94,867 fewer cases of obesity, 1,915 fewer cases of cardiovascular disease, and prevented or delayed 2,857 cases of diabetes. The research also suggests the policy is also expected to save the NHS £218 million over the lifetime of the current population.

Local advertising policies

- There is momentum across London boroughs to adopt a similar advertising policy to TfL. To date, a healthier advertising policy has been implemented by Haringey (2019), Southwark (2019), Merton (2020), Greenwich (2021), and Barnsley (2022). In 2021, Bristol was the first city outside of London to implement a healthier advertising policy.

Tower Hamlets as a leader in Good Food

- Implementing a healthier advertising policy in Tower Hamlets would build on the London momentum and ensure that advertising in Tower Hamlets that may have a negative influence on health and wellbeing, is not placed through the council. Working in this area chimes with other related awards and commitments on healthier food, such as Sustain's Good Food for London award, which gives recognition for tackling HFSS advertising. For the past two years, Tower Hamlets Council has won Good Food for London awards, and implementing a healthier advertising policy would add to Tower Hamlets being a leader in the 'healthy environments' area.

Environmental Impact

- There is an important sustainability impact of this policy. HFSS products are some of the most exploitative foods and drinks for the environment. The products this policy is seeking to restrict tend to be heavily processed, heavily packaged products that are damaging to our environment.

Wider communication plan

- The launch of the advertising policy will be part of a wider child healthy weight communication plan.

Implementation

- Implementation of the advertising policy will require a Task & Finish group who will oversee the incorporation of this policy into new and renewed

advertising contracts and negotiate agreements within existing contracts. If this policy is agreed, it will be implemented with existing resources.

5 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- In Tower Hamlets there are significant inequalities in child excess weight levels with higher rates reported for children from low socio-economic groups and from minority ethnic backgrounds. Other health conditions related to the food and drink we consume also follow a social gradient; for example, children from more deprived areas are more than twice as likely to have dental decay compared to children from less deprived areas.^{xvi}
- HFSS advertising widens health inequalities. Children and adults from low socio-economic groups are more likely to be exposed to advertisements for HFSS foods. This contributes to higher rates of obesity in low-income households, worsening health inequalities between rich and poor.

6 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 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.

Who has been consulted with on this paper and policy to date

A summary of the engagement is outlined below.

Who we engaged with

- We engaged with over 100 residents from the groups listed below, inviting their views on advertising in Tower Hamlets through presentations, events, online and face-to-face surveys. We also consulted with people working in the borough, as detailed below.
 - Survey with parents/carers – online and via the Spring Festival for Family Wellbeing
 - Visit to St Peter's Docks CE primary school to speak with parents
 - Activities with children at the Spring Festival for Family Wellbeing

- Survey with Tower Hamlets Equalities networks, specifically the Women's network and Minority Ethnic network
 - Survey with Women's Inclusive Team
 - Presentation and group discussion at Tower Hamlets Youth Board meeting
 - Survey and meeting with Food for Health businesses
 - Meeting with Tower Hamlets Food Partnership
 - School headteachers surveyed
- We have also engaged with various internal teams.

Engagement results

- Out of the residents who completed surveys, 91% of residents said they would support the council stopping unhealthy food and drink being advertised on Council owned advertising space.
- 90% of residents are 'very worried' or 'somewhat worried' about adverts in Tower Hamlets which advertise unhealthy food and drink to children. This is because unhealthy food adverts are believed to be undermining parents' efforts to promote healthy eating habits for children in a borough already saturated with unhealthy food options. There is a perception that the council should lead by example and promote healthier food options, and a genuine concern expressed by parents for children's current and future health.
- The Healthy Lives team surveyed primary and secondary headteachers across the borough. All those who responded (22) were in support of the policy, with no opposition received.

Risk implications

- This Policy will only be applied on Council owned estates; assets; and through our procured advertising service contracts, so we do not anticipate external challenges, in fact our engagement has demonstrated a lot of support from within our communities.
- There is limited financial risk to this policy, and we do not expect it to impact Council revenue streams because the policy doesn't 'ban' any brand from advertising but swaps out unhealthy products for healthier ones.
- After the policy was implemented across the TfL network, the revenue increased. TfL confirmed that revenues had gone up by £1m in the first quarter after the policy was implemented. Those figures were sustained over the first year of the policy being live, with TfL reporting advertising revenues going up by £2.3m (before Covid).^{xvii}
- We have contacted several councils regarding the adoption of the policy. Bristol, Haringey, Southwark and Greenwich have been implementing the healthier advertising policy for between two to three years and have reported no revenue

losses. These councils reported that advertisers continue to advertise products that are compliant with the policy. Transport for London, which implemented the policy in 2019, experienced an increase in revenue from £156 million to £158.3 million after adopting the policy.

- Table 1 below outlines the revenue the Council has made from its advertising space between 2020-2023.

Table 1: Tower Hamlets Council Advertising Revenue 2020-2023

	Revenue 20/21	Revenue 21/22	Revenue 22/23
Total	£930,626.00	£1,187,003.13	£1,195,973.00

7 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- This report sets out the healthy advertising priorities for the borough.
- Any costs arising from meeting the priorities highlighted in this report, in line with the requirement to meet the Public Health Outcomes Framework (as set by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities), will need to be funded via the Public Health Grant. The Tower Hamlets Public Health Grant allocation for 2022/23 is £37.4m.

8 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- Section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 requires the Council to take such steps as the Council considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in Tower Hamlets. Therefore, the implementation of the measures highlighted in this report are part of the Council's legal function.
- The report highlights evidence to show that the measures highlighted in the report may lead to a decrease in the purchase of unhealthy foods and a positive effect on the prevention of obesity. Therefore, it is reasonable for the Council to consider the highlighted measures appropriate in line with the above legislation.
- In addition, as the owner of some physical advertising sites as well as online sites, it is reasonable for the authority to have a policy in place that ensures that adverts placed by third-parties do not conflict with the Council's strategies and statutory aims.
- Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that local authorities (subject to any certain statutory restrictions) have the power to do anything calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. Local authorities have responsibility for improving the health of their local population. An advertising policy intended to tackle child obesity and improve public health is clearly calculated to facilitate that function.

- The Council has several agreements with third parties for the use of the advertising space. These agreements restrict certain types of advertising covered by this policy but not all. Therefore, the Council will have to work with their contracted partners to reach agreement on further restrictions on the types of advertising. Otherwise the policy will be phased in as and when the existing agreements are renewed.
- The agreements referred to in clause 7.5 tend to be property agreements as opposed to being Public Services Concessions. This is because the Council does not require the contractors to carry messages on the Council's behalf. The restriction on the types of advertising does not transform the agreements into public services concessions.
- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the authority, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act, to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual 12 orientation. The duty must be complied with at the time that the decision under consideration is taken.
- The introduction of this policy is an executive decision and is therefore a decision for the Mayor in Cabinet.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- NONE

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


- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Natalie Lovell, Public Health Programme Manager, Healthy Environments Team, Public Health
 Katy Scammell, Associate Director, Healthy Environments Team, Public Health

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<p>Cabinet</p> <p>24th May 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: James Thomas, Corporate Director Children & Culture</p>	<p>Classification: [Unrestricted]</p>
<p>Response to Overview & Scrutiny: Increasing Female Sports Participation</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Iqbal Hossain, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation
Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Eady, Director of Commissioning & Culture & Lisa Pottinger, Head of Sport & Physical Activity
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	N/A
Forward Plan Notice Published	28/03/2023
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	3. Accelerating Education 4. Boosting Culture, Business, Jobs, and Leisure 5. Investing in Public Services

Executive Summary

This report submits the service action plan in response to the Overview & Scrutiny Challenge session report and recommendations on “increasing women and girls access and participation in sport provision and physical activities in the borough.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Consider the report and agree the proposed action responding to the Children & Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee Challenge Session on “Increasing Women and Girls Access and Participation in sport provision and physical activity”.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council’s constitution requires the executive to respond to the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

- 1.2 This report and the action plan at Appendix 1 is the executive's response to the recommendations arising from the overview and scrutiny challenge session, increasing female participation in sport and physical activity.
- 1.3 Women constitute 49.2% of the Tower Hamlets population and is one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. National and local data evidence show that female participation in sport & physical activity is lower than that of men. Under the Act, the Council has a duty to protect women from discrimination in accessing and participating in Council services. This report outlines ways in which female participation in sport & physical activity can be increased. Furthermore, the Council's strategic plan prioritises increase in participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the increase in women and girls in sport & physical activity is a strategic priority and the Scrutiny challenge, has provided an evidence base, from national and local data, that used best practice guidance to improve the service and the experience of female residents in accessing and using sport & physical activity services in the borough.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Being physically active is important for overall good health. Participation in sport and physical activity lowers blood pressure, improves levels of good cholesterol, improves blood circulation, assists with weight control and prevents bone loss that can lead to osteoporosis, particularly in menopause women.
- 3.2 National, regional and local participation statistics indicate that women and girls participate in sport and physical activity less than men and boys.
- 3.3 Women constitute 49.2% of the Tower Hamlets population but the percentage of the female population that is classified as being active is 10.6% lower than their male peers (Source: Sport England Active Lives 2020-21 data set). The evidence base also indicates that female activity decreased by nearly 10% from 2015-16 to 2020-21. This reduced level of participation is not only due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic but also a variety of motivational, cultural, social, and physical barriers.
- 3.4 Following the overview and scrutiny challenge session on 9th February 2023, the service has developed an action plan based on the recommendations, which came out of the session.

- 3.5 The committee heard evidence from residents, young people, external experts, and Council officers.
- 3.6 The challenge session report outlines the scope of the methodology used for the session. The report also presents key findings from the evidence gathered from the challenge session.
- 3.7 The report acknowledged the lower levels of female sport participation when compared to men and made six recommendations to improve access and increase female sports participation in the borough. The recommendations are grouped in the key findings section which can be found in the full challenge session report attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.8 The service action plan acknowledges a 'whole-systems change' approach that will require co-ordination across several Council departments and partner services such as schools, voluntary sports clubs and organisations, to name a few. It is likely the delivery of the action plan Much of will require additional resources, both human and financial with these considered as the project progresses and we engage with external organisation like London Sport and the Youth Sports Trust.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendations within this report will positively impact access to and participation in sport & physical activity for women and girls in the borough, one of the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 4.2 It should also be noted that by addressing the barriers to access and participation by women and girls, the overall impact of these changes will also be beneficial to all regardless of their background.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Any additional costs in relation to this project will be met through repurposing current budgets or through the specifications within the new insourced Leisure service. There would be no additional cost to the General Fund.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 requires a local authority to take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area. These steps may include providing services or facilities to promote healthy living.
- 7.2 The public sector equality duty, set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires public authorities to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Sex is one of the protected characteristics.
- 7.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, set out in the Council's Constitution, require the Executive to consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or Sub-Committee at one of its future meetings setting out its response to any recommendations. The Council will consider the report at its next ordinary meeting if appropriate.
- 7.4 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and with the Constitution.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Service Action Plan
- Appendix 2: Children & Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee Challenge Session Report on Increasing Women & Girls Access & Participation in Sport Provision in the Borough

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Lisa Pottinger, Head of Sport & Physical Activity

How the Council and its partners can increase women and girls access and participation in sports provision and physical activities in the borough

Recommendation 1

Community engagement

Using the co-design framework, the Council's Sports and Physical Activity Service (CSPAS) will set up a steering group to engage women and girls on their needs for accessing sport provision and physical activities in the borough.

Comments from Service:

Action	Owner(s)	Completion date
1.1 Conduct desk research and engage with key partners to obtain an evidence base for female sports participation and establish the participation baseline for Tower Hamlets	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 2 - 2023-24 (September 2023)
1.2 Establish The Tower Hamlets Women's Sports & Physical Activity Network (WS&PAN) & The Women's Sports Board to include Council officers, schools, Tower Hamlets community stakeholders, sub-regional and regional non-governmental and national governing bodies of sports (NGB's) to undertake a stakeholder mapping exercise as appropriate	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 1 - 2023-24 (June 2023)
1.3 Scope and produce a community engagement strategy for women's sport & physical activity, linked with insourcing and youth service workstreams. Conduct consultation and targeted focus groups with female residents / VCS/service users to determine barriers to participation, mechanisms to improve accessibility and co-produce a programme of activity informed by local women and girls.	Senior Communication Officer / Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 2 - 2023-24 (July 2023)
1.4 Work in concert with the Leisure insourcing workstreams to support the Women in Sport agenda and establish a SPA programme of women & girl's sporting activity for 2023-24 financial year informed by the WSN & WSB and consultation with key Stakeholders, residents, and service users with a view to develop a co- designed programme of activity for Q3 2023-24	Head of Sport & Physical Activity / Service Manager (SPA)	Quarter 3 - 2023-24 (July 2023)
1.5 Work in partnership with GLL to increase women-only sports provision in the leisure centres to pre-pandemic levels.	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 2 – 2022-23- (July 2022) complete

Action Plan

1.6 As part of the leisure insourcing workstream, consult and co-design a programme of leisure centre female only activity, training, voluntary and employment opportunities.	Head of Leisure Operations / Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 1 - 2023-24 (April 2024)
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Affordability CSPAS should work in partnership with the borough's sport delivery partners, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and grass root sports to ensure that access and participation in sports provision and physical activities is both affordable and is actively encouraged to women and girls.</p>		
Comments from Service:		
Action	Owner(s)	Completion date
2.1 Produce a community sports plan for Tower Hamlets Leisure Centres prioritising female sports provision and how GLL will engage with key partners to enhance and support community sports provision for women & girls	GLL Partnership Manager & Community Sports Manager	Quarter 1 - 2023-24 (May 2023)
2.2 Conduct a benchmarking exercise of neighbouring boroughs to determine costs of female sports activity. Using examples of good practice, collect an evidence base to on the effectiveness inform the insourced leisure service	Leisure Contracts Manager	Quarter 2 - 2023-24 (July 2023)
2.3 Conduct a review of leisure centre policies, strategies, and provision with regards to female participation and access to services as part of leisure insourcing project.	Head of Leisure Operations	Quarter 4 -2023-24
2.4 To work in partnership with grass roots community provision to enable provision to be more accessible	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 1 - 2023-24
2.5 Explore funding opportunities to support this area of work.	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Q3 – 2023-24

<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Campaigns and publicity CSPAS should consult the Council's Corporate Communication Service alongside partners' comms services to positively promote women's sport provisions and physical activities borough wide.</p>		
<p>Comments from Service:</p>		
Action	Owner(s)	Completion date
3.1 Recruit a dedicated communications officer (as part of the leisure insourcing work) to support the women and sport campaign, raising awareness, case studies, promoting opportunity and celebrating success.	Communications Team	Quarter 3 - 2023-24
3.2 Scope and produce a communications & marketing campaign with the Council's Communications Department, outlining the communication channels of the Council and its partners for example RSL, NHS, CVS etc to be used to improve the marketing of women's sport & physical activity opportunities in the borough	Senior Communication Officer / Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 1 - 2023-24
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Female friendly infrastructure CSPAS will collaborate with key partners to develop dedicated female friendly infrastructure and includes location, timetable of facilities, build in competitions and develop scope for employment and training pathways for female to work in the fitness sector.</p>		
<p>Comments from Service:</p>		
Action	Owner(s)	Completion date
4.1 To conduct a mapping exercise of existing female sports provision by the Council and its partners	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 1 - 2023-24 (March 2024)
4.2 To work in partnership with the other Council departments to ensure accessibility and delivery of female activity is a key priority in the allocations of Council resources and commissioning	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 3 - 2023-24 (October 2023)

4.3 Scope and develop a programme of training and the creation of employment pathways to increase female workforce in the borough's leisure centres	Head of Leisure Operations / HR Workstream	Quarter 3 - 2023-24 (October 2023)
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Quality monitoring, intelligence capture and audit CSPAS will develop robust systems to capture and measure key diversity, equality and usage performance information across all provisions for women and girls. Monitoring should also include, policy reviews, mystery shopping and pulse audits to ensure that the sports provision is relevant, and sustainable.</p>		
Comments from Service:		
Action	Owner(s)	Completion date
5.1 Although it can encourage and attempt to influence, CSPAS can only control the monitoring and evaluation systems within its service. However, CSPAS will work in partnership with other Council departments and key partners (e.g. CVS, National Governing Bodies, sports clubs etc. to encourage the development of robust data capture mechanisms.	Head of Sport & Physical Activity	Quarter 4 - 2023-24
5.2 Through the leisure insourcing project and development of the Leisure Management System (LMS) develop a system of monitoring to track participation against targets. In addition, the quality assurance framework for the new service with include mystery shopping, quality audits and the capture customer satisfaction.	Head of Leisure Operations	Quarter 4 - 2023-24
<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Women and girls safe routes to sports provision and physical activities CSPAS will use the feedback from women and girl (on safe routes to sport venues) and engage and work with key partners such as Transport for London, public realm and regeneration to ensure that any policy or access redesign takes on board and reflects the views women and girls.</p>		
Comments from Service:		
Action	Owner(s)	Completion date

<p>6.1 This recommendation requires a whole system approach and will need support and be resourced by all relevant Council departments and partners. CSPAS will liaise with partners to encourage the use of Sport England Planning guidance for all sport & physical activity spaces in borough, which incorporates safe routes for women and girls as a priority.</p>	<p>Planning / Highways / Parks / Strategy Leisure (TBC)</p>	<p>Quarter 4 - 2023-24</p>
<p>6.2 Liaise with Health, Adults & Community Services, Violence Against Women Service to integrate safe leisure routes into existing work programmes such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A series of women’s safety virtual walks across the borough, covering every ward in partnership with planning and the Police where women highlight places they don’t feel safe (around their home address, routes to work or routes they travel regularly etc). - Develop action plans to help improve areas identified by women as feeling unsafe by making physical improvements (like lighting and CCTV), through to hotspots for misogyny and behaviour change campaigns as appropriate. This information will inform the Local Plan allowing more consideration for landscape design that better protects women going forward. - Community Engagement events (Safety Surgeries and Walkabouts) where local residents have the chance to engage with us and share their concerns. 	<p>Health, Adult & Community Services, VAWS</p>	<p>Quarter 4 - 2023-24</p>

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Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Challenge Session

How the Council and its partners can increase women and girls access and participation in sports provision and physical activities in the borough

09/02/23



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Foreword

I am pleased to present this report which considers how the Council and its partners can increase women and girls participation in sports provision and physical activities in the borough.

I know that participation in physical activity and with sport provision can be influenced by social factors such as social groupings, family and friends, in addition to personal factors such as age, gender, disability, ethnicity and disposable income. I know from recent history that there is a shift in direction and that women in sport can defy gender stereotypes and social norms, becoming the inspiring role models and showing men and women as equals.

The United Nations Women¹ understand the role that sport plays and the power it has to change lives and suggests its influence can drive gender equality teaching women and girls teamwork, self-reliance, resilience and confidence. Sport inspires and creates meaningful change so that all women and girls have fair access to physical activity and sporting opportunities, whilst helping to unlock some of the challenges in their lives.

This report seeks to consider and understand the barriers and low take up for accessing sports provision and physical activities by women and girls in the borough. It examines the gaps to consider if current supply of sports provision and physical activities in the borough are equitable and meets the demand for women and girls access and considers the strategy and policy context in amplifying the women and girls voice and feed into the Council's strategic goal for supporting improved sports provision and physical activities in the borough. The report further seeks to understand the key challenges that the Council and its partners face in increasing women and girls access to sports provision/ physical activities in the borough, and the policy solutions needed to address the challenge and have a positive impact.

This challenge session provided the Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee an opportunity to scrutinise the current state and picture of access to sports provision and physical activities for female residents. It provided scope to hear from a range of witnesses and robust evidence informing the Sub-Committee that the Council and its delivery partners need to collaborate and do more to support increasing the access and participation from women and girl residents in the borough.

The Sub-Committee has made six recommendation and hopes that the Mayor and Cabinet take forward these recommendations and work with Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee to ensure that the Council and its partners offer a sustainable and robust policy approach that contributes to the overall health of the borough's population.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members, officers and external partners who attended and supported the discussion, provided valuable insights and shaped the recommendations of this report.

Cllr Bodrul Choudhury
Chair of Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee



¹ [Women and girls in sport | UN Women - Headquarters](#)

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Community engagement

Using the co-design framework, the Council's Sports and Physical Activity Service (CSPAS) will set up a steering group to engage women and girls on their needs for accessing sport provision and physical activities in the borough.

Recommendation 2

Affordability

CSPAS should work in partnership with the borough's sport delivery partners, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and grass root sports to ensure that access and participation in sports provision and physical activities is both affordable and is actively encouraged to women and girls.

Recommendation 3

Campaigns and publicity

CSPAS should consult the Council's Corporate Communication Service alongside partners' comms services to positively promote women's sport provisions and physical activities borough wide.

Recommendation 4

Female friendly infrastructure

CSPAS will collaborate with key partners to develop dedicated female friendly infrastructure and includes location, timetable of facilities, build in competitions and develop scope for employment and training pathways for female to work in the fitness sector.

Recommendation 5

Quality monitoring, intelligence capture and audit

CSPAS will develop robust systems to capture and measure key diversity, equality and usage performance information across all provisions for women and girls. Monitoring should also include, policy reviews, mystery shopping and pulse audits to ensure that the sports provision is relevant, and sustainable.

Recommendation 6

Women and girls safe routes to sports provision and physical activities

CSPAS will use the feedback from women and girl (on safe routes to sport venues) and engage and work with key partners such as Transport for London, public realm and regeneration to ensure that any policy or access redesign takes on board and reflects the views women and girls.

Reason for Enquiry

1.1. The Mayor's priority to boost culture, business and leisure identified the following pledges on women's sports and physical activities:

i	Promote women's sports and increase availability of women's gym and swimming sessions; and
ii	Make sure all of our sports facilities and facilities of our partners are women friendly and meet the cultural needs of our diverse communities.

1.2. In its role as a critical friend, the Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee identified through its annual work programme 2022-23 the need to:

- understand the barriers and low take up for accessing sports provision and physical activities by women and girls in the borough;
- examine the gaps to consider if current supply of sports provision and physical activities in the borough are equitable and meet the demand for women and girls access; and
- consider the strategy and policy context in amplifying the residents (women and girls) voice and feed into the Council's strategic goal for supporting improved sports provision and physical activities for women and girls in the borough.

Methodology

2.1. This challenge session was chaired by Cllr Bodrul Choudhury, Chair of Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee and took place on Monday 21st November 2022.

2.2. The Sub-Committee heard from a range of witnesses including the Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation, Youth Cabinet Members, Youth Sports Trust, Women in Sport, Women Inclusive Team, Fitness Reborn, Voluntary Sector Children and Youth Forum Co-ordinator, Schools Games Organiser and Council officers.

2.3. The scope of the challenge session sets out the following key questions:

1	What are the are key barriers that's preventing women and girls from taking up or sustaining their access to sports provision/ physical activities in the borough?
2	What are the key challenges that the Council and its partners face in increasing women and girls access to sports provision/ physical activities in the borough?
3	What are the policy solutions needed to address the challenge and have a positive impact? Who needs to be involved? How do we need to approach this?

2.4. Members in attendance

Cllr Bodrul Choudhury	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee(CESSC) Chair
Cllr Musthak Ahmed	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cllr Mohammed Abdul Wahid Ali	CESSC Member
Cllr Ahmodur Kabir	CESSC Member

Cllr Sabina Khan	Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources
Cllr Abdul Malik	Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety
Cllr Iqbal Hossain	Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation
Halima Islam	Co-opted Member
Jahid Ahmed	Co-opted Member

Evidence heard from witnesses

Ablah Chazhiyattri	Youth Cabinet Member for Environment
Intisar Alam	Youth Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
Ashley Hosier, Naomi Bolton and Wendy Taylor	Youth Sports Trust
Liz Prinz	Women In Sport
Safia Jama	Women Inclusive Team
Nazia Khatun	Fitness Reborn UK
Alex Nelson	Voluntary Sector Children and Youth Forum Co-ordinator
Steve Dolben	School Games Organiser
James Thomas	Corporate Director for Children and Culture
Matthew Eady	Director for Commissioning and Culture
Lisa Pottinger	Head of Sports and Physical Activity

Challenge Session supported by

Filuck Miah	Senior Strategy and Policy Officer
Zaid Ul Islam	National Management Trainee

Key Findings

Recommendation 1 Community engagement

Using the co-design framework, the Council's Sports and Physical Activity Service (CSPAS) will set up a steering group to engage women and girls on their needs for accessing sport provision and physical activities in the borough.

- 3.1. The Sub-Committee heard evidence from a range of witnesses on the importance of ensuring that women and girls have the opportunity to be actively involved in the re-design of sports and physical activities in the borough. Female youth cabinet members informed the Sub-Committee that they, and their female peers, felt that their experience of sport in schools is not inclusive and that girls can only take part at certain times in the day and week and emphasised that schools really need to create more girls only sessions.
- 3.2. The Sub-Committee considered evidence from Women in Sport (WiS) whose research indicated that girls and women can be influenced by their personal fears of judgement, often starting from the age of 5-11 and feeling pressure to get things right at the first time. The Youth Sports Trust (YTS) also provided evidence and cited their research from the 'Girls Active' project with schools in Tower Hamlets which identified that understanding girls motivation is an important factor and that taking a long-term approach is needed to engage girls in sports and physical activities. Their

research also suggests that teachers must change their thinking that girls lack of engagement means girls are the problem. Teachers need to encourage girls to be at the centre of the conversation and engage them in dialogue to understand the types of challenges girls face and establish the changes they would like to see in sports and physical activities in their school. YTS added that girls need to be empowered and involved in the process to design, delivery of services and influence opportunities on what is available to them. WiS research supported this and empahsied that the providers of sports should ensure that girls voices is reflected at the heart of everything being done.

- 3.3. The Sub-Committee also heard evidence from the Chief Executive of Women Inclusive Team (WiT) who raised the issue of being on the menu but not being around the table, and felt that services often lack the right representation. Communities must be represented when considering funding and designing services. The Sub-Committee enquired the best way to engage women so as to understand their physical activity needs and reasons that prevent them for participating. WiT also informed the Sub-Committee that establishing an environment in which cultural family structures (that includes all women of the family group) can discuss their sports and physical activities needs, is missing and needed. CSPAS conceded there was a gap which required a platform to co-ordinate female voices and articulate their needs. The Sub-Committee also heard evidence from Fitness Reborn (Tower Hamlets based fitness coach) who cited the benefits of sports for women and girls and felt that it gave them a voice and identity. They also reflected on their experience of the challenges they faced coming from a south Asian family and moving away from traditional careers lacking parental support and being not excited in them becoming a fitness coach.
- 3.4. Representation from the voluntary sector informed the Sub-Committee that some of the sector's organisations have fed back on the barriers that women and girls face in sports. Whilst there is a lot of information on various platforms, it could be made easier to find things that suit when individuals are available
- 3.5. On hearing the evidence, the Sub-Committee concluded that it was important to ensure the voice and views of women and girls on this issue is captured and reflected in any policy development for sports provision and physical activities. The Sub-Committee also felt that it would be useful for the CSPAS to seek the advice and expertise of the Council's Communities Service.

Recommendation 2 Affordability

CSPAS should work in partnership with the borough's sport delivery partners, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and grass root sports to ensure that access and participation in sports provision and physical activities is both affordable and is actively encouraged to women and girls.

- 4.1. The Sub-CommitteeSub-Sub-Committeeconsidered some of wider economic challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis that impacted on women and girls ability to afford and take up physical activities and sport provisions in the borough. The youth cabinet members highlighted boxing as an example of being unaffordable and too expensive to take up after school. They also highlighted that timetabling is a significant issue and whilst it might be offered free once a week, girls often have limited capacity as they need to prioritise their education and feel additional sessions are too costly.

- 4.2. CSPAS reiterated that cost is often a barrier for lower socio-economic groups, especially at a time where households face a cost-of-living crisis. The youth cabinet members added that parents would often default and say it is too expensive. The youth cabinet members feel that it is important that more days of free sessions are offered, particularly as girls might be unsure about what sports they enjoy and may need to try out and establish if they are truly interested in taking it up as a hobby.
- 4.3. The voluntary sector representative also commented that accessing different sports provision through technology such as booking onto the course can become a barrier if girls do not have the necessary technology and the cost of things become the primary issue. The school games organiser informed the Sub-Committee that cost is a barrier such as buying sports equipment, girls often receiving limited parental support and girls facing the challenge of being able to get to different locations to participate in competitions. Equally, clothing and equipment for sports is expensive and this is compounded by images of sports people promoting the idea that unless you are dressed in particular way for sports you will look out of place. Cultural and religious norms can also set strict requirements about appropriate dress code and this is visible within the Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic groups, thus limiting their participation. Therefore its important to allow alternative dress code as this will help to reduce religious and cultural discrimination.
- 4.4. The Sub-Committee queried CSPAS about how much funding is used for girls sports and if this is ring fenced. CSPAS informed that funding is not specifically allocated to female sports but measured using key performance indicator i.e. the London youth games requires 50% specific female targets and is a key priority. The Sub-Committee also asked witnesses, what impact the current cost-of-living crisis will have on participation and if there are alternative options that can help to improve women and girls participation. WiS acknowledge that it will impact women who are likely scale back their own fitness activities so that their children can continue to take part. The Sub-Committee asked if CSPAS can help with the funding to increase more sports activities for women and girls such as partnering with local gyms or help with the cost of kits. The Sub-Committee were informed that the Council has to operate within the budget that has been set and allocated. However, the Sub-Committee felt that there might be opportunities for developing offers such two for one or group discounts to encourage greater take up and participation. The Sub-Committee felt that there might be opportunities consider different payment options and be as flexible as possible. Pay as you play rather than long contracts.
- 4.5. The Sub-Committee understood that using free introductions may be useful as women are unlikely to sign-up for long periods of time if they are not confident about an activity or sport. To collaborate and partner up with sports delivery providers pooling resources and spreading the risk but also seeking funding options through corporate social responsibility avenues and the wider corporate benefits of obtaining good public health. WiT informed the Sub-Committee that community centres across the borough are also able to offer up the spaces to hold physical activity sessions. They have a strong rapport, connection and based in the community for example London Muslim Centre offer keep fit sessions with a female only gym and most girls could go because it is a trusted location that meets the religious requirements and is easily accessible.
- 4.6. A number of the witnesses highlighted the ongoing challenge of childcare costs as women may have less leisure time than men, often taking on the greater load of responsibility for housework, childcare and care of the elderly. Some women may

therefore be reluctant to commit to provisions over a longer period of time. The Women and Sports Fitness Foundation (WSFF) suggests that crèche facilities or even classes for toddlers and children would be needed to encourage participation, so that women can bring their children along when they go to exercise and providers need to be as flexible as possible when considering length of sign-up periods.

- 4.7. CSPAS recognised that there is need to join up the requirements of the service users to facilitate equality of provision, for example grant funding has historically focussed on male sport and male sports clubs. WSFF suggested that funding at most levels, for women attract less funding than men. At community sports level, girls teams tend to attract less sponsorship from local businesses because they do not have a large support base. These inequalities of funding can often result in poor facilities, equipment and kit as well as less sponsorship for female athletes. The Sub-Committee recognised that cost could create inequalities so it was important to also review existing practices, allocation and take action to address the inequality, ensuring where possible application of equal funds for female sports provision. The Sub-Committee also recognised that sports and facilities need to be local, available and affordable, that sensible pricing is needed to participate such as reduced charges for certain groups, for example the unemployed and providing low cost thresholds for equipment hire could help improve access and participation.
- 4.8. YTS informed the Sub-Committee that it was important to use partnership and collaboration to offset some of the cost-of-living challenges that women and girls face on affordability and therefore limiting their take up of sports provision in the borough. WiS advised the Sub-Committee that the CSPAS should work with the sport providers to allow women to bring their daughters together and highlighted that family togetherness time enabled a reason to take part.

Recommendation 3 Campaigns and publicity

CSPAS should consult the Council's Corporate Communication Service alongside partners' comms services to positively promote women's sports provision and physical activities borough wide.

- 5.1. Media plays a central role in informing people's knowledge, opinions and attitudes about women and sport, which, in turn, influence participation levels. Women working in a sector where they are in the minority can give women the sense that they don't belong in the world of sport. Some women and girls are turned off 'sport' altogether because they see it as a male-dominated activity. It is just not seen as feminine or 'girly' to be interested in sport and, for many girls, being sporty is felt to be at odds with being feminine.
- 5.2. CSPAS informed the Sub-Committee that cultural attitudes to female sports and physical activity participation remains a challenge. It accepted that sports provision and delivery partners must communicate better, be timelier and able to raise awareness so that it translates to greater take up and participation. CSPAS also accepted that this needs greater collaboration with non-traditional partners such as the equalities hub, housing associations and support for an ongoing borough wide campaign to improve the behaviour culture.
- 5.3. The voluntary sector representative highlighted a need to educate others as some young women and girls were not allowed to participate by their family members, and organisations have reported that they have to provide reassurance or persuade the member of the family that it is safe and women only. WiT also highlighted that it

was important to change the mindset of some of the male groups within the community, particularly in cultures where protecting the family can also limit and create barriers to participation. Developing an honest conversation, one which brings together faith and culture in an open discussion, and includes celebrating women in sports who are connected to their faith and culture, may help to change the narrative and views held in the community.

- 5.4. YTS outlined that making physical education relevant to girls in their lives is critical, as often the reality is not enough girls see the importance of being active to their own lives. The youth cabinet members added that training the culture and changing the role models they are supposed to have alongside, improving the communication style in which girls are spoken to, may encourage participation and also help to deal with challenges such as anger and self-confidence. The Sub-Committee heard that culture has a big impact on communities and the perception is that sport facilities for young girls and women are limited; with wider media and societal issues, parents want their children to be safe, they need have confidence about timings and who is involved. The youth cabinet members outlined that young girls also have the cultural challenges and behaviour such as it is not modest or limited on religious grounds. WiS commented, that the youth cabinet evidence demonstrated that the the message was not replicated across the board from parents, schools, clubs in that sports is for girls just as much as boys. Whilst there is pockets of good practice, the Sub-Committee recognised that a borough wide campaign is needed that really emphasises to girls that sport is for them and getting the message right will resolve some of the issues.
- 5.5. Both Fitness Reborn (FR) and WiT informed the Sub-Committee that representation was also key to improving participation amongst female groups. FR outlined that having a role model with sub-cultures helps the relatability factor whilst having an appreciation of the dynamics of being an Asian, Muslim women and dealing with family and community pressures to fit the mould and look in a certain way. WiT informed, that representation, communication and having positive role models is important, not just personnel but also in the form of assets and community languages used.
- 5.6. The Sub-Committee heard from a number of witnesses on the importance of utilising media and publicity. The use of press release and good relations with other community media will be important to widen the reach and promote girls and women's sport achievements. Therefore increasing media coverage of women's sports, ethnic minority sports, increasing representation of more role models from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women, challenging stereotypes, improving advertising of local provision and offers will be key to improving participation amongst these groups.
- 6.1. CSPAS informed the Sub-Committee that Tower Hamlets is behind and has a deficiency in sport facilities for its population (based on Sport England guidance) which may further compound the challenge that women and girls face in accessing sports provision in the borough. CSPAS outlined that inaccessibility and limited access of culturally appropriate community sport venues, especially schools, was a challenge. More broadly, that there was a lack of female sport clubs or women sections in existing clubs which limited safe, culturally appropriate places for female sport.

Recommendation 4 Female friendly infrastructure

CSPAS will collaborate with key partners to develop dedicated female friendly infrastructure and includes location, timetable of facilities, build in competitions and develop scope for employment and training pathways for female to work in the fitness sector.

- 6.2. The Sub-Committee recognised that access to facilities can sometimes be the cause of barriers. Women and girls cannot play sport if they cannot get access to facilities at suitable times. WSFF adds that too often, sport halls prioritise male sports that men get facilities at the preferred times whilst women have to make do with less convenient times, so reviewing the allocation of facilities and pitch time would help to ensure equitable access during peak times for women's sports. The Sub-Committee raised concerns about provision timings and that it may not be suitable or fair for women's access for example swimming available on Sundays only at 4-5pm being too busy and thus reducing capacity as well as having male lifeguards during female swimming session only, can culturally put women and girls off.
- 6.3. The Sub-Committee considered if more small-scale outreach work at different venues and sites would help increase participation and engagement from seldom heard women and girl groups. WiT informed that bringing services to the community is important and that some of the issues are down to people not trusting or understanding provision or just not being able to access the provision. Therefore developing thinking outside the traditional approach is crucial and bringing services and sessions into the community, developed and led by the community for the community, will ultimately help to engage women and girls and increase participation with sports and physical activity.
- 6.4. The Sub-Committee considered if there are other barriers or sports that girls find hard to engage with. The youth cabinet members informed that often competitive sport is geared towards boys and even boxing or basketball is mainly boys and girls often feel uncomfortable playing in mixed sports. That there was no parity in terms of training sessions for girls when compared to boys and that mixed teams outside of schools did not have a good take up from girls as they felt uncomfortable with their team mates. Girls who did take part in competitions did so outside of the borough and the youth cabinet feel strongly that everyone including girls should be able to play competitive sports in their own borough. The youth cabinet expanded that equally there was not enough competitive school sports for girls and that there needs to be more sport tournaments for girls. YTS girls active research² also suggested that girls did not wish to be grouped with boys during physical education and that having girls only sessions has a huge impact on confidence.
- 6.5. WiS informed the Sub-Committee that at an elite level there is a beginning of a shift for women and girls, for example England women's European football championship victory, however it is not reflected across vertical channels of women and girls sport and there is no ecosystem parity or it doesn't exist for girls. Using football as an example, we can see that at an early age when comparing girls to boys, they are seeing male footballers placed on a stage and considered idols in the broader society, that dads are watching football on TV and are also taking boys for kickabouts in the park, so from a young age the national sport is heavily featured in the boys lives.

² [National - Girls Active Pre-Intervention - Girls report \(youthsporttrust.org\)](#)

- 6.6. The youth cabinet members informed the Sub-Committee that they took part in gym facilities offered by the school (before school commenced) and provided just for one day which was inadequate and added that many of the sport facilities at school have restricted time and days. These restrictions make it more difficult for young girls to take part resulting in low take up. The Sub-Committee also heard that girls go to swimming concession mainly because there is a lack of competitive sports available for them. The Sub-Committee recognised that schools tend to have more provisions for boys and that currently, girls facilities and timetable are not flexible and therefore reduces their ability to participate. The Sub-Committee also heard that both culture and religion can limit on how much girls engage within physical activities and that they do feel more conscious and uncomfortable when they are in mixed groups or gyms.
- 6.7. The Sub-Committee noted that the youth cabinet members expressed that they wanted to see more provision for women and girls, and a better timetable and a dedicated facilities for only women and girls including having female staff, role models, coaches, organisers and managers that represents them. That young females should be encouraged to take up jobs within the sports and fitness sector helping to increase their self-confidence and supporting the development of a female friendly infrastructure. The Sub-Committee felt that it would be useful for the CSPAS to seek the expertise, advice and steer from the Council's strategy and transformation service on service redesign issues. YTS informed the Sub-Committee that both workforce and having strong role models can positively influence change in schools. The school games organiser informed the Sub-Committee that 2021-22 season, a girls only netball competition was held where the environment was closed off at a private venue was deemed hugely successful.
- 6.8. The Sub-Committee recognised that improving local provision, developing scope for more physical education in the national curriculum in schools, increasing the level of women and minority sports as well as carefully planning the timing of sessions to target certain groups, for example for women with young children put on mid-morning sessions after the school run, provide activities that families can take part in together and offer facilities that are easy to get to and can cater for the community needs will help drive participation. The Sub-Committee noted that tailoring to the Asian community based on faith and gender can be replicated to support the Somali community women and girls sports and physical activity needs whilst helping to make best use of resources.

Recommendation 5 Quality monitoring, intelligence capture and audit

CSPAS will develop robust systems to capture and measure key diversity, equality and usage performance information across all provisions for women and girls. Monitoring should also include, policy reviews, mystery shopping and pulse audits to ensure that the sports provision is relevant, and sustainable.

- 7.1. YTS research³ informed the Sub-Committee that childhood obesity (nationally) in 2020-21 had seen the biggest rise with 1-4 age group and Year 6 pupils being obese. They concluded that inactivity needs to be also a national concern. Sedentary behaviour amongst young people led to poor physical and mental health with increased numbers being unhappy at school settings.

³ [Girls Active - Youth Sport Trust](#)

- 7.2. CSPAS provided the Sub-Committee with some comparative data between male and female gender groups, membership, timetable and female and leisure centre provision to provide some context to Tower Hamlets. CSPAS informed the Sub-Committee that level of participation have decreased as a result of socio-economic groups and ethnicity but also the demographic intersectionality was a further factor. They advised the Sub-Committee that female participation is lower than male in both team and individual sports. Whilst the Sub-Committee welcomed data between Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic (BAME) and non BAME, the Sub-Committee felt that this did not provide a detailed enough breakdown of the different ethnicities or age groups or different sports participation levels. The Sub-Committee needed to understand the breakdown of women and girls from the minority ethnic groups in terms of facilities, age and usage to get a sense of the picture. The Sub-Committee felt that whilst membership of a club or leisure centre provided some numbers it did not reflect or answer the question on how and when that provision was being used.
- 7.3. The Sub-Committee queried the data behind the number of activities for women and by having no usage data made it difficult for the Sub-Committee to understand if the provisions are working effectively in terms of participation. The Sub-Committee considered if the current conditions and levels of service provision that is being provided for female residents is not satisfactory as a result of political will or resource or both. CSPAS acknowledged that resourcing was a challenge but informed the Sub-Committee that it was ultimately tasked to provide a balanced provision. For example the 47% represents overall participation trends with provisions such as Mile End Leisure Centre the pitches are used by men but women may tend to use indoor facilities for fitness classes thus balancing provision use.
- 7.4. The Sub-Committee raised concerns about the first come first policy and queried when this was last reviewed. The Sub-Committee felt that this was a significant barrier to girl and women's participation and one which needed to be reviewed urgently. The Sub-Committee also recognised the importance of having an ongoing dialogue with women and girls and using mystery shopping audits to help measure the performance of sport providers and service level it offers to women and girls. The Sub-Committee was not satisfied with the current level of data used to assess or plan service provisions and requested reassurance that better systems would be in place to improve the level of intelligence captured, with a more detailed breakdown of different women and girl groups, age, usage etc. The Sub-Committee also felt that it would be useful for CSPAS to seek expert advice and steer from the Council's Strategy and Improvement service on how best to develop systems to capture key performance information on diversity, equality and usage of provisions that the Sub-Committee has requested.

Recommendation 6 Women and girls safe routes to sports provision and physical activities

CSPAS will use the feedback from women and girl (on safe routes to sport venues) and engage and work with key partners such as Transport for London public realm and regeneration, to ensure that any policy or access redesign takes on board and reflects the views women and girls.

- 8.1. Personal safety on the streets, on public transport and in and around sports and community venues can be a challenge for women and girls. Some groups are more vulnerable, for example Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic women and girls can become targets of racist behaviour. People with disabilities can also become targets of bullying and abuse. Therefore travelling to and from sport locations can present

particular barriers for these groups. There are also cultural considerations for families limiting travel for girls after dark as a form of protection. This challenge has been heightened with the recent media reports of women's safety and more generally the public perception of safety has intensified, often requiring assurances from families before they agree with their girls participation. WiT also informed that Sub-Committee about the role and importance of developing key partnerships with transport providers, police and other authorities and taking a collaborative approach on safety in a public setting.

- 8.2. The Sub-Committee heard from a number of witnesses highlighting some of the concerns around women and girls safety in public spaces becoming a barrier to their participation with sports. The Sub-Committee enquired on the issues that women and girls faced with barriers to participation. CSPAS informed the Sub-Committee that there was a perception that sporting places were unsafe for women and girls for example local parks during winter. The point was also supported and reiterated by the school games organiser who outlined that environmental factors such as the days getting dark, with poor visibility in some areas can affect young girls not feeling safe to move around for sports.
- 8.3. WiS research in the parks⁴ added, that non gendered provision becomes gendered because boys dominate the pitches and the cages or actively keep girls out of those spaces through judging them on a very harsh standard. The Sub-Committee heard that girls are not only being judged on their sporting performance but they are also being judged in public spaces and often girls may also feel unsafe emotionally because of comments about their appearances or being made to feel uncomfortable by boys asking for their numbers. It is important to also consider the emotional safety alongside the physical safety for girls and providing them with a safe space.
- 8.4. The Sub-Committee examined if resourcing local transport would help to improve safety and the take up by women and girls in sport provisions and physical activities as lack of safe routes to venues is often a concern for women and girls. The voluntary sector representative informed the Sub-Committee that buddying with an appropriate adult is more cost effective than setting up and managing a volunteering programme of support. They also advised that some schools are arranging safe transport or safe ways getting home although its not replicated across the borough.
- 8.5. The Sub-Committee considered the pivotal role that being safe played on increasing women and girls participation and access to sport provisions in the borough. The Sub-Committee understood that more safety assessments would be required of venues taking into account the safety of the area, street lighting, transport links. It acknowledged that it was important to capture the views of women and girls about their experiences and views of personal safety in those areas and ensure activities are offered in locations or facilities that are safe and appropriate for women and girls.

Conclusion


- 9.1 This challenge session provided scrutiny a chance to examine the current picture on women and girls access and participation with sports provision in the borough. It provided an opportunity for the Sub-Committee to hear robust evidence from a range of witnesses drawing out some of the barriers that women and girls faced with access. It is clear from the evidence heard that the Council and its delivery partners

⁴ [Our Publications - Women In Sport](#)

have a role to play and one that needs to consider strategies to improve participation including promotion, provision and access. The Sub-Committee has made six recommendations and hopes that the Mayor and Cabinet take forward these recommendations and work with Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee to ensure that the Council and its sport delivery partners offer a sustainable and robust policy approach to the borough's population health and fitness.

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Agenda Item 6.3

<p>Cabinet</p> <p>24th May 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: James Thomas - Corporate Director Children's Services</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Recommendations for the delivery of Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) to secondary school pupils in KS3 & 4</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdor, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education and Life Long Learning
Originating Officer(s)	Steve Nyakatawa – Director of Education Matthew Eady – Director of Commissioning and Culture Jenny Pittam – Head of Contract Catering Services Katy Scammel – Associate Director of Public Health
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	Yes
Reason for Key Decision	Mayor's pledge to deliver UFSM to all secondary school pupils
Forward Plan Notice Published	28/03/2023
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Strategic Plan 2022-26 Priority 1 Tackling the Cost-of-Living Crisis – No child shall go hungry. Priority 3 Accelerate Education – Every child achieves their best in education.

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of actions taken and being taken to implement the Mayor's pledge to deliver UFSM to all secondary school pupils up to the age of 16.

Tower Hamlets will be the **first** Council to extend free school meals to **all** secondary school pupils up to the age of 16, having delivered a highly successful universal primary free school meal (FSM) offer for the last ten years. Studies have shown that a universal free school meal offer can:

- Support pupils who live in poverty but do not qualify for the National Free School Meal (FSM) offer.
- Increase the uptake of meals for eligible FSM pupils. It is anticipated that Tower Hamlets will benefit from similar results as Hammersmith and Fulham's UFSM pilot scheme where the take up of Eligible FSM almost doubled.
- Mitigate the impacts of household food insecurity and reduce health inequalities.
- Reinforce healthy behaviours through the daily provision of a high quality, healthy and nutritious meal.
- Support educational outcomes as there are positive associations between nutrition and cognitive function, behaviour and attainment.
- Support positive learning and improve behaviour for disadvantaged pupils – helping to narrow the attainment gap.
- Help to tackle poverty during the cost of living crisis – a FSM offer provides a financial saving of £550 per year per child. For a family with 3 children this would be a saving of £1,650 per year.
- Support increased levels of local employment in the school meals catering sector.

Following the findings of surveys completed in all 22 secondary schools on their capacity to deliver, recommendations are made on the proposed phasing of the project, the funding levels required to support a good quality nutritious meal offer to all pupils, support for schools, and associated Conditions of Grant. This will ensure consistency across all schools to maximise take-up of the project and provide accurate financial reporting.

The report also highlights key actions still to be implemented and further challenges to be overcome for the successful delivery of the project.

Recommendations

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree to fund the meal price at **£2.90** per pupil per day rising to £3 in year 2 of the project.
2. Agree to a **3-phase approach** to launching the project to allow schools to prepare appropriately for the deliver of meals to all secondary school pupils.

3. Agree to fund the upfront investment costs for all the schools estimated to be a total of **£722,350** to ensure schools have the correct equipment and resources to increase their catering capacity.
4. Approve the **Conditions of Grant**, support provision and evaluation activities for schools. These will provide a clear and consistent framework on how to derive maximum benefit from the project (encouraging uptake of good quality nutritious school meals) as well as providing data to demonstrate maximum value for money for Tower Hamlets' investment in UFSM.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 **£2.90** per meal will ensure that a consistent, compliant high quality meal can be provided to all pupils and that staffing costs are met by the additional hours required to ensure an efficient service delivery. The Board which consists of representatives from Secondary School Head Teachers, LBTH Finance, Public Health, Legal, Comms, Caterers & External Consultants have agreed that it is an initial credible level of funding. However, to meet the challenges of increasing food inflation and high London Living Wage pay rates, £3 per meal will be needed in Year 2 to ensure the standard of the food offer is maintained.
- 1.2 If schools don't have the time to invest in their services properly and in a timely manner then the success of the project could be jeopardised, leading to poor meal uptake due to long queues, inefficient services and a reduced quality food offer.
- 1.3 12 schools and academies have a level of initial investment required to meet the increased production of school meals. Schools have confirmed their budgets for next year and have no planned allocation for this investment. On this basis it is recommended that the council covers this cost for all schools to ensure a successful launch of the UFSM project.
- 1.4 Without **Conditions of Grant** and provision of practical support for schools, there is a risk that the standard of food offer will be inconsistent and less healthy, and take-up of the free school meal offer will be lower. This will consequently limit the health benefits the programme will bring to young people. In addition, if not monitored, funding claimed from the council may not be accurate leading to an overspend on the UFSM annual budget.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Schools have raised a concern about phasing the start of the project, with some pupils benefitting earlier than others. To mitigate the inequality of this situation, the council could make direct payments to schools/pupils for UFSM in the interim period. However, the Board including external caterers and professional consultants do not recommend this option as schools will not be ready. There may be long queues, possibly resulting in an adverse start to the project from a pupil perspective. Good positive comms around

the Councils decision to phase the project start dates should help to overcome this concern.

- 2.2 An alternative solution to phasing the project would be to delay the start until all schools are ready to deliver and launch in April 2024. However, this is not recommended as the Mayor has pledged to launch in September 2023 and this has been publicly announced.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Background

In May 2022 Mayor Rahman made a manifesto pledge to provide UFSM to all KS3 & KS4 Secondary Pupils. This commitment has since been reflected in LBTH's Strategic Plan 2022-26 with implementation planned from September 2023.

A Project Initiation Board was established to look into how UFSM could be delivered. The Board consists of representatives from Secondary School Head Teachers, LBTH Finance, Public Health, Legal, Comms, Caterers & External Consultants. A Catering Logistics Forum was also set up made up of School Head Teachers and Caterers to discuss/plan the logistics of the project.

A professional catering Consultancy was commissioned in December 2022 to conduct feasibility studies to determine the implications and capacity of the 22 secondary schools to feed every student a healthy lunch every day. The aim of the feasibility studies was to inform the Council's approach on the Secondary UFSM offer.

A survey was conducted in each school to review the current meal uptake, the current nutritional profile of the food served and key service parameters including serving times, kitchen production capacity, staffing levels and available dining space. The survey assessed whether each school could deliver the increased uptake required by the project with existing facilities. Where school facilities were not capable of delivering the increased meal numbers, the evaluation team identified and costed the additional equipment and staffing resources required to do so. The findings of the feasibility surveys were concluded in March and shared with the Board.

3.2 Key Objectives of the UFSM Project

Tower Hamlets currently funds UFSM for all primary school pupils and studies have shown that a universal FSM offer can:

- Support pupils who live in poverty but do not qualify for the National Free School Meal (FSM) offer.
- Improve uptake of meals for eligible FSM pupils.
- Mitigate the impacts of household food insecurity and reduce health inequalities.

- Reinforce healthy behaviours through the daily provision of a high quality, healthy and nutritious meal.
- Support educational outcomes as there are positive associations between nutrition and cognitive function, behaviour and attainment.
- Support positive learning and improve behaviour for disadvantaged pupils – helping to narrow the attainment gap.
- Help to tackle poverty during the cost of living crisis – a FSM offer provides a financial saving of £550 per year per child. For a family with 3 children this would be a saving of £1,650 per year.
- Supports increased levels of employment in the school meals catering sector.

3.3 National Context and evidence base

Tower Hamlets will be the **first** Council to extend free school meals to **all** secondary school pupils up to the age of 16, having delivered a successful universal primary school offer for the last ten years.

Tower Hamlets already has one of the country's highest benefits related FSM rates – at 40%. The threshold for benefits related FSM is £7,400 household income (before benefits) and many thousands of Tower Hamlet children live in households in receipt of benefits but not eligible for FSM.

Westminster Council have recently announced that they will provide FSM to children aged between 3 and 14 in an expansion of its FSM programme from September 2023. Southwark Council has agreed to provide FSM for one year to local secondary school pupils whose parents live on Universal Credit but don't receive FSM.

Hammersmith & Fulham Council has successfully piloted UFSMs in 2 small secondary schools (one SEN). The project was a success in that they increased the uptake of those already eligible for benefits related FSM from 39% to 68 % in just one year.

Recent evaluation of Hammersmith & Fulham's , "[Universal free school meals in secondary schools are a feasible and acceptable way to address food insecurity](#)", summarises the key findings. It provides recommendations on how to capitalise on the potential of universal free school meals to ensure no young person is too hungry to learn. Key findings included:

- School staff and parents/carers who have experienced universal FSM (UFSM) say the benefits outweigh the potential cost of supporting families who do not need financial help.
- Incentives for schools include its potential to improve concentration and behaviour during lesson time, stigma reduction, and an easier administration process.

- UFSM is feasible and acceptable in secondary schools, regardless of size or catering set-up, particularly with staggered lunchbreaks that many schools introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- However, the current evidence-base for effectiveness and cost effectiveness of UFSM in secondary schools to address food insecurity is poor and needs more schools to pilot the scheme.

In March, the Mayor of London confirmed FSM would be extended to every child of primary age in a one-off £130 million programme. The scheme will come into effect from September 2023 and be offered across the capital for one year. Currently in England, universal free school meals are only free to children in KS1.

Children miss out on FSM if their household income, excluding benefits, is over the threshold of £7,400 a year even if their families receive universal credit.

3.4 Results of the Feasibility Surveys

3.4.1 School Dining

The surveys generated data gathered from the individual schools on student roll, sales, Eligible FSM numbers and overall meal uptake. The schools all operate different till systems and have differing levels of data granularity. The survey evaluated 2 key variables that directly affect each school's ability to deliver higher uptake:

1. Current Uptake – Eligible FSM usage and cash sales.
2. Resource requirements: Equipment and Staffing.

3.4.2 FSM Usage & Cash Sales

Schools manage cashless catering services to ensure there is no differentiation between cash paying and Eligible FSM students. Students who are not eligible for FSM pay cash at break and at lunch; their accounts are loaded on by parents / carers using ParentPay or similar.

Across the Borough on roll, the total number of pupils for KS 3&4 is 14,854. The Eligible Secondary FSM population is currently 6,357 students or 42.8% of the total. (*data from Oct 2022 mainstream school census*). A concerning statistic is that only 3,494 students use the FSM entitlement regularly. This means the Borough only has a 55% uptake on FSM and significant numbers of students are **not** using their entitlement.

In the UK on average FSM eligibility is 22.5% of students. This shows the importance of encouraging maximum uptake and supports the need for automatic Pupil Premium FSM enrolment in Tower Hamlets.

Without this, there will be a material effect on the number of meals paid for by the Borough when they should be funded via the Government.

3.4.3 Free school meal allocation across Tower Hamlets

There are varying prices attributed to FSM across Tower Hamlets. This depends on the school, the surrounding area and the contract, if any, with the catering contractor. Tariffs for the 2023/2024 academic year have not been confirmed but current prices range from £1.80 to £3.00.

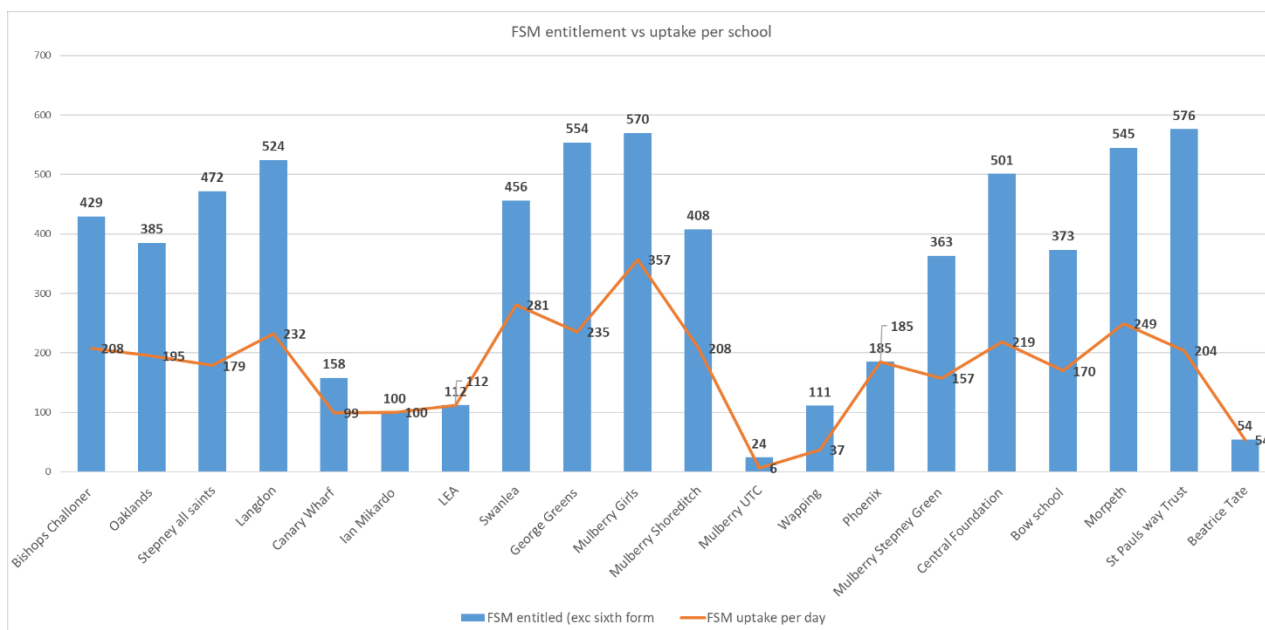
FSM values are allocated to student accounts in the morning of each day. Some schools allow student to use their allowance at morning break and lunch, others mainly at lunch. Ideally it is recommended that the UFSM offer is ringfenced and only used at lunchtime, however, with the increased take up of meals, it may be more practical for schools to offer the UFSM at morning break as well. This will enable more pupils to benefit from the UFSM offer and take the pressure off the dining hall at lunchtime.

3.4.4 Eligible FSM Entitlement & uptake

To gather accurate data on the FSM entitlement for each school the auditors evaluated the till reports as they link into SIMS and are anonymised. The average FSM eligibility across Secondary Tower Hamlets is 42.8% against the national average of 22.5%.

The current average uptake of the allowance is 55%. Only 4 schools in the borough serve every student every day – they are Ian Mikardo, London East Alternative, Beatrice Tate and Phoenix. They all deal with students with special needs, and they have smaller rolls than the other schools.

There are variable uptake rates across the schools for FSM. The chart on the following page shows that most of the schools are serving only half of their FSM entitled students. There is no data available on the eating patterns of the other half, or reasons for them not taking lunch every day.



Further pupil surveys and youth council engagement will be required to understand the reasons for students not taking their entitlement every day. Positive messaging and parent / carer communications will be needed to promote the benefits of a nutritious free meal every day. Practical support should be offered to schools to put in place effective policies and practices to increase uptake, as is happening with the primary School Food Improvement Programme.

It is anticipated that Tower Hamlets will benefit from similar results as Hammersmith and Fulham’s UFSM pilot scheme – though practical ‘hands on’ support and guidance was given to schools. The increase in take up of Eligible FSM almost doubled and this was put down to a change in the dining room culture. A lot more pupils went to the dining hall for a meal and Eligible FSM pupils no longer felt singled out by going there, possibly without their peer group with them. This will be a really positive outcome for this project if Tower Hamlet’s students adopt similar behaviours.

3.4.5 UFSM Take Up and Recommended Funded Meal Price

Based on School data, 57.2% of Secondary students, are not eligible for FSM and pay for their meals or bring in packed lunches. This student cohort will be eligible for funding from the Mayor’s project. The Mayor’s project, whilst aiming for 100% uptake, more likely will increase the overall uptake to between 75% and 85%. (On any school day, there will be pupil absences for example).

For the 2023/24 Financial year the LBTH funding formula funds Eligible FSM at £3.00 per pupil. This is higher than other councils but has the Tower Hamlets London weighting applied. The Council are recommended to agree to fund the UFSM meal price at £2.90 per pupil per day in the first instance rising

to £3.00 in the second year. The Board which includes external caterers and professional consultants have agreed that it is an initial credible level of funding.

£2.90 per meal includes all food, labour and material costs involved in delivering the additional meals but not capital expenditure. This price will ensure that a consistent, compliant high quality meal can be provided to all pupils and that staffing costs are met by the additional hours required to ensure an efficient service delivery. However, to meet the challenges of increasing food inflation and high London Living Wage pay rates, £3 per meal will be needed in Year 2 to ensure the standard of the food offer is maintained.

The cost projection in the table below assumes a funded meal price of £2.90 and 190 trading days per school per year.

Student type	Meals Per Day	Meals per Annum (190 days)	Cost @ 85% Uptake	Cost @ 80% uptake	Cost @ 75% uptake	Note
Total Pupils Eligible FSM	6,357	1,207,830	£2,977,301	£2,802,166	£2,627,030	Eligible FSM = Funded by the Government
Total Pupils Paid	8,497	1,614,430	£3,979,570	£3,745,478	£3,511,385	UFSM - Funded by LBTH
Total	14,854	2,822,260	£6,956,871	£6,547,643	£6,138,416	

Catering Contractors are increasing meal prices by 10% to 17% to compensate for the increases in costs due to food and wage inflation. With regard to other local benchmarks, the London Borough of Newham currently fund FSM Primary meals at £3. Contract Catering Services have a recommended secondary meal price of £2.70 until Sept 2023 when it will increase to £2.90.

3.4.6 Compliance with Government School Food Standards

The Government School Food Standards defines the nutritional content and portion sizes caterers must observe when operating in schools. It defines portion sizes, calorie intake and limits the number of days that fried foods and processed meats can be on the menu.

Compliance with the School Food Standard was assessed during the site surveys using the school's 2- or 3-week menus. **Appendix 1** details the School Food Compliance audit. School food compliance across the Borough is in need of improvement. Whilst the audit showed some compliance the actual quality of the food on offer in the schools varied significantly and high standards are in place in less than half of the schools surveyed. The average level of compliance is 75% excluding morning break but this should be 100%. In one school, only 56% of the food was compliant and none of the schools were fully compliant.

Morning break causes a degree of deviation from the School Food Standards and erodes the average compliance further to 73% including morning break.

The table below shows the survey scoring per school for morning break and lunch.

Including Morning Break		Excluding Morning Break	
School	Compliance	School	Compliance
Bow	67%	Bow	73%
Bishop Challoner	62%	Bishop Challoner	62%
Stepney	81%	Stepney	81%
Langdon	62%	Langdon	63%
Canary Wharf	79%	Canary Wharf	79%
Ian Mikardo	85%	Ian Mikardo	87%
London Enterprise	53%	London Enterprise	56%
Swanlea	83%	Swanlea	83%
George Green	85%	George Green	88%
London East Alternative	79%	London East Alternative	79%
Mulberry Girls	67%	Mulberry Girls	67%
Morpeth	67%	Morpeth	73%
Mulberry Shoreditch	67%	Mulberry Shoreditch	67%
Mulberry UTC	76%	Mulberry UTC	79%
Central Foundation	67%	Central Foundation	73%
St Pauls Way Trust	81%	St Pauls Way Trust	83%
Phoenix	85%	Phoenix	85%
Wapping	69%	Wapping	69%
Mulberry Stepney Green	68%	Mulberry Stepney Green	72%
Average	73%	Average	75%

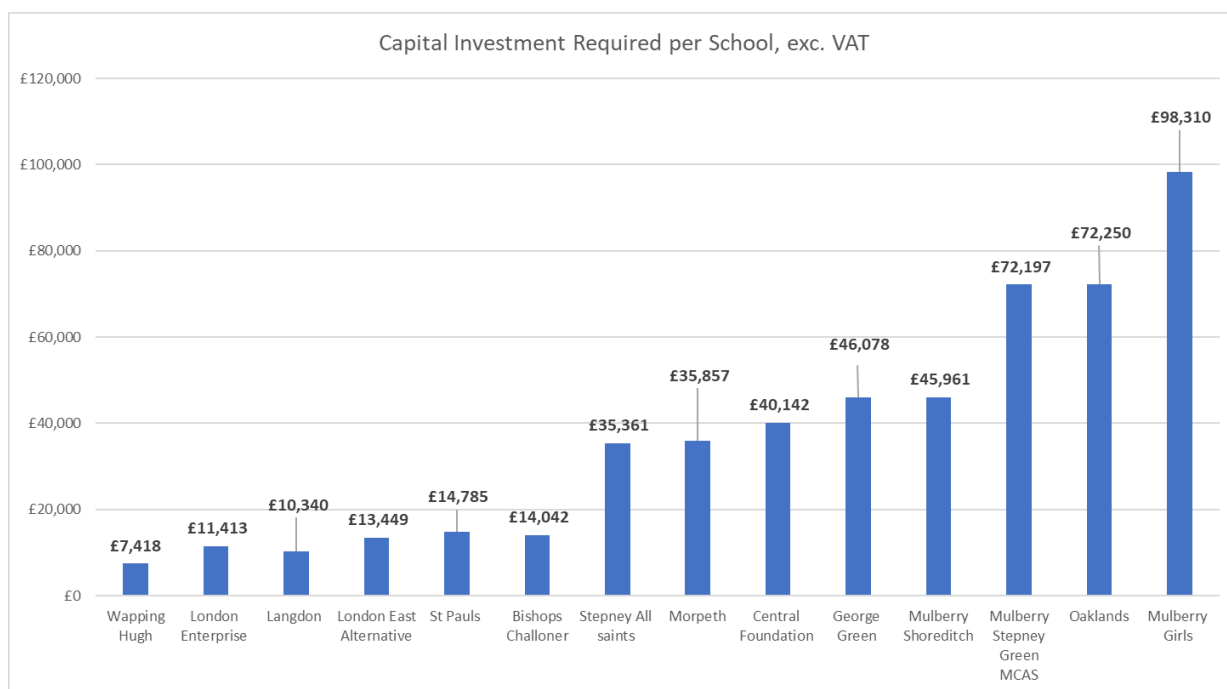
In addition to this, the sales mix in each school was assessed to understand the sales by product. The vast majority of schools have main meals and meal deals listed as top selling products but there are some products generating significant income that are not the healthiest products and should be sold less frequently. Given the Borough's commitment to healthy eating and promoting children's healthy weight, **a recommendation of the Mayor's funding will be that only school food standards compliant food can be offered as part of the UFSM food offer.**

3.4.7 Delivering the Project

The site evaluations were used to develop a detailed cost projection on the equipment that will be needed to ensure the UFSM project is delivered successfully. All schools were RAG rates depending on the equipment and staffing requirements needed. The following table shows how each school was RAG rated and the level of initial investment required needed to ensure a successful launch of the UFSM project.

The initial costs, before inflationally increases are listed below:

	Oaklands	Mulberry Stepney Green MCAS	Mulberry Girls	Total			
Exc Vat	£72,250	£72,197	£98,310	£242,757			
	Stepney All saints	Morpeth	Central Foundation	George Green's	Mulberry Shoreditch	Total	
Exc Vat	£35,361	£35,857	£40,142	£46,078	£45,961	£203,399	
	Wapping	London Enterprise	Langdon	London East Alternative	St Pauls Way	Bishops Challoner	Total
Exc Vat	£7,418	£11,413	£10,340	£13,449	£14,785	£14,042	£71,447
	Phoenix	Ian Mikardo	Mulberry UTC	Canary Wharf	Swanlea	Bow	Total
Exc Vat	£0	£0	£0	£500	£3,929	£5,995	£10,424



A schedule of equipment required in each school is detailed in **Appendix 2**.

In some schools, where dining space is limited, a number of new service points / outlets across the schools are recommended some of which are inside the school buildings and some outside. The equipment needs range from an additional hot counter and till to create an additional service point. Others are more complex and would need for counters to be moved from their current position and sited elsewhere. Others require external “pods” to be installed.

Additional Pod (basic fit out cost £20,388)

- Morpeth
- Central Foundation
- George Greens
- Mulberry Girls
- Mulberry Stepney Green
- Oaklands

Examples of Pods in Schools



Three schools have PFI contracts in place: two Mulberry Schools and Central Foundation Girls. This complicates the process of getting equipment into the school and where the asset sits in terms of maintenance and title. Additionally, where facilitation works are required such as gas / electrical / plumbing this would have to be arranged through the PFI contract. Should this be the case the agreement stipulates that there is likely to be an additional management fee surcharge (Mulberry Stepney Green MCAS have stated that this is as much as 14%) on the equipment costs.

3.3.8 Initial Funding

The total upfront investment costs for the schools was initially estimated to be £528,027 and this covered all the costs to ensure 12 schools have the correct equipment and resources to increase their catering capacity. This initial funding has since been revised to **£722,350** to reflect inflationary increases on all supplies and services and to include estimated contingency costs. The new costs are based on recent quotes from 3 catering equipment suppliers. **Appendix 3** details the price variances since the surveys were undertaken in January 2023 together with the estimated contingency costs. The council is recommended by the Board which includes the views of Head Teachers to agree to fund the upfront investment costs. Schools have confirmed their budgets for next year and have no planned allocation for this investment. On this basis it is recommended that the council covers this cost for all schools to ensure a successful launch of the UFSM project.

3.4.9 Proposed Phasing of the Project

Based on the RAG rating results, **the Board recommends that the project is launched in 3 phases as follows.**

Phase 1 – schools RAG rated dark and light green should go live in September 2023 and act as pilot schools for the delivery of UFSM (12 in total). These will be monitored for meal take up and issues such as queues in the dining hall and the quality of the food offered. Lessons learned and best practice will be shared in readiness for the next phase of schools to go live.

Phase 2 - schools RAG rated orange should go live in January 2024 (5 in total). These schools have proposed pods to install and the lead time for these to be ordered, delivered and installed means they will not have the capacity to successfully deliver UFSM to all pupils in September.

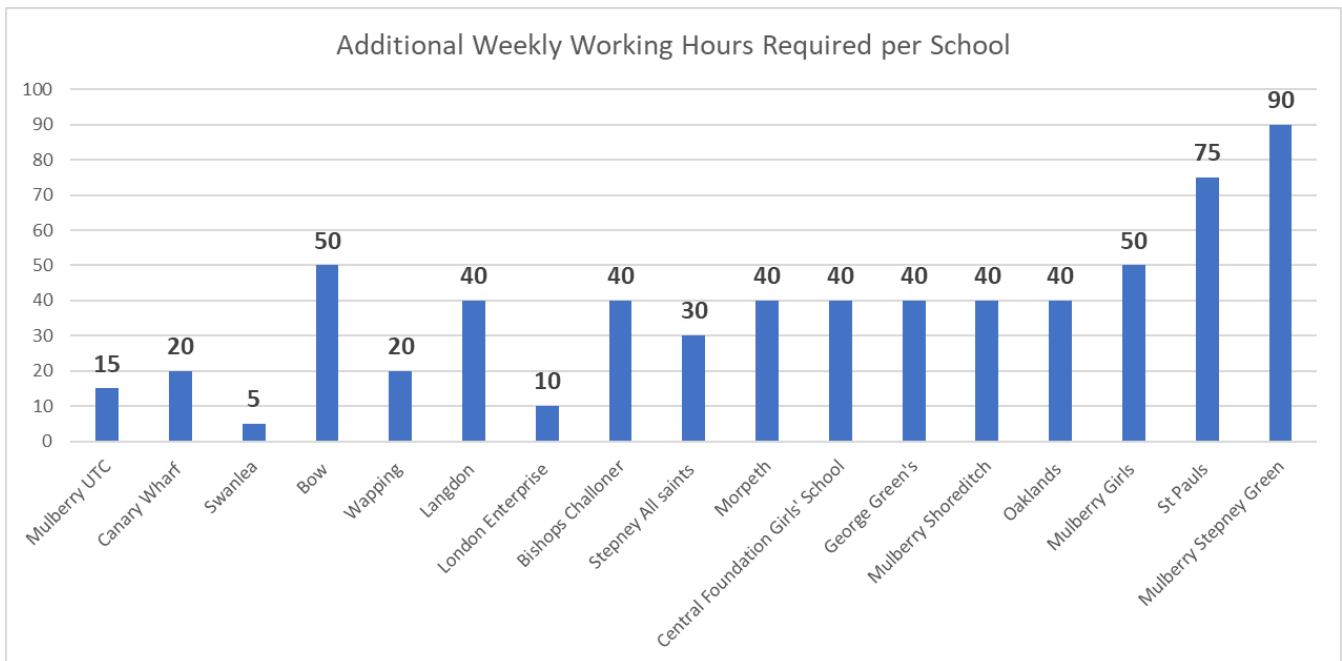
Phase 3 – 3 schools (Oaklands, Mulberry Stepney Green and Mulberry Girls schools) have the most complicated and costly changes to make to ensure their catering facilities have the capacity to deliver UFSM. It is envisaged that April 2024 will most likely be the best time for these schools to go live.

Schools have raised a concern about phasing the start of the project, with some pupils benefitting earlier than others. To mitigate the inequality of this situation, the council could make direct payments to schools/pupils for UFSM in the interim period. However, the Board including external caterers and professional consultants do not recommend this option as schools will not be ready. There may be long queues, possibly resulting in an adverse start to the project from a pupil perspective. Good positive comms around the Council's decision to phase the project start dates should help to overcome this concern.

An alternative solution to phasing the project would be to delay the start of the project until all schools are ready to deliver and launch in April 2024. However, this is not recommended as the Mayor has pledged to launch in September 2023 and this has been publicly announced.

3.4.10 Staffing Requirements for schools

The surveys carried out assessed what additional labour costs would be required to meet the increased production of school meals. The individual annual labour costs and additional 645 weekly working hours required per school are shown in the following tables:



The recommended £2.90 funding price will support this additional labour cost. However, if uptake is poor and there isn't sufficient revenue to support the labour cost, local school subsidies may increase if catering contractors can't deliver a break-even service.

3.4.11 Additional Support for Schools to prepare for UFSM

Additional external Catering Consultancy support was commissioned in April to further support schools in their preparations for delivery of UFSM in the following areas;

1. Equipment Purchase and Installation

- a. Based on the agreed specifications, equipment lead times are currently three months, so orders needed to be confirmed by May 19th, 2023, to ensure delivery, installation and commissioning by mid to late August.

2. Catering Operation Negotiations

A negotiation programme with schools and catering contractors taking 2 months to complete needed to start in April to ensure staff recruitment and induction plans are ready for the start of term. School recruitment effectively ceases during August so all new roles will need to be appointed in July for a September start. Other key areas to be negotiated between the school and the catering contractor are:

- a. Menus to ensure School Food Standards Compliance.
- b. Tariffs for main courses and meal deals to agree.
- c. Sales forecast to include at least 85% uptake for KS 3&4.
- d. Staffing levels and working hours required confirmed.
- e. To agree till reporting formats and data reporting frequency, to meet the Councils Schools Finance funding requirements.

3.4.12 Conditions of Grant

Tower Hamlets have an opportunity to apply appropriate Conditions of Grant to the secondary UFSM funding. (Associated Conditions of Grant have been in place for free KS2 primary meals since 2019).

Applying Conditions of Grant can provide schools with a clear and consistent framework on how to derive maximum benefit from the policy (encouraging uptake of good quality nutritious school meals) as well as providing data to demonstrate maximum value for money for Tower Hamlet's investment in free school meals.

Conditions of Grant must be easy and approachable for schools, rely on collectable and reportable set of Key Performance Indicators, and link into the wider evaluation activities. A summary of the proposed Conditions of Grant is details in **Appendix 4** but the main Conditions will include:

- Payment of universal meals will be made monthly in arrears by the Schools Finance team and only subject to presentation of actual meal numbers taken and till receipts available for inspection as evidence of sales.
- Payment of London Living Wage to all catering staff (whether contracted or in-house)

- Demonstrable efforts to increase school meal take-up rates

It is recommended that some additional practical, officer role or external professional consultancy support is provided to schools to help them deliver the universal FSM policy, especially in its first year of implementation. This will help ensure high take up of nutritious food and enable schools to provide relevant information to comply with the Conditions of Grant. (The cost of this additional support has not been budgeted for in the project). A continuation of a smaller Board could be agreed in order to oversee and report on the successful delivery of the programme particularly in the first year.

A cross-council Programme team, comprising respective departments (e.g. benefits, finance, education, public health, healthy lives, catering services) will work together to ensure that schools are provided with the most appropriate support to maximise take up and protect pupil premium.

3.4.13 Project Evaluation and Consultations

The project team are currently exploring opportunities to evaluate this new programme area. With it being the first borough in the UK to introduce such a policy there is significant national and academic interest.

There are several funding streams being explored.

The Genius School Food Network, a network of experts and academics working within UK school food research, have submitted a bid for National Institute of Health Research funding to support the council to complete a baseline before introduction in September. This will precede an application for an additional larger pot of funding to do a full process evaluation, starting after September 2023.

Evaluation of this programme will also be an important test of the potential for the new Tower Hamlets Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC). The HDRC is establishing the infrastructure we will need to make research easier in the future, so we more fully understand the impact of our work on the health and wellbeing of local residents and can use this evidence and have evidence to inform future decisions. The HDRC could also help to raise the profile of this work locally nationally and internationally.

Before the programme launches, pupils will also be consulted to ensure the meal offer will meet their needs and lead to high uptake. As part of the baseline evaluation, a pupil survey will also be disseminated across all secondary schools in the borough that will reflect the key areas Tower Hamlet's want to evaluate - uptake, eating habits throughout the day (lunch vs mid-morning break), thoughts on school food provision and the impact of school food provision on eating habits outside of school hours. The broader evaluation will also focus on health inequalities, looking at whether the UFSM offer has had an impact on increasing uptake for eligible FSM pupils and

improved nutrition among individuals and communities facing greater health inequalities.

3.4.14 Other Project Implementation Challenges

Pupil Premium Funding

Headteachers have raised concerns that the Mayor's project could directly compromise Pupil Premium funding (and other school associated funding that is reliant on FSM pupil registration). The Pupil Premium funding is based upon FSM 'sign up' from Eligible parents / carers. Pupil Premium funding supports FSM entitlement, additional spending on teaching resources, teaching assistant support and specific projects in the schools. The Headteachers' concerns are that if a parent no longer has to sign up for Pupil Premium then funding will diminish substantially or simply be withdrawn.

The Council is currently considering options to provide better automation and 'opt-out' mechanisms in order to support schools – in addition to the government's Eligibility Checking Service, which most schools currently use. This will reduce the burden on schools. In Sheffield, this process has identified additional pupils who had not previously registered, as well as reduce administration for schools.

If this is not possible, then further incentive and support mechanisms will be provided to schools, drawing on national best practice, as well as the experiences of Tower Hamlet's primary schools.

Service Time Availability & Headteacher Concerns

Secondary Schools have varying amounts of time for lunch break, some are very short at 45 mins to the longest one being 2 hours. To ensure more students can enjoy a healthy lunch, where space is limited, a longer service time would allow every student to take up on a lunch. However, there is resistance to extending lunch breaks in some schools due to the need to drive academic excellence and maximize the time in lessons.

Many Headteachers are actively working to promote academic achievements post-covid. As a result, food service times have reduced to support this goal. Many schools are completing their school timetables for the 2023/2024 and once set; these are very difficult to change. There is concern that extending lunch breaks may reduce lesson times or alter the start / finish time of the day which is seen as unacceptable.

There is also concern about the current space available to serve lunches from, especially where the site is small and external space is at a premium. Where possible external pods have been proposed to alleviate time pressures. Should the lunchtime break not be extended, further investment in additional service outlets may be required to mitigate queuing times and the pressure on one dining room facility.

For some schools with limited space UFSM may be offered at mid-morning break. A freshly made hot and cold "Grab and Go" offer can still be compliant

and healthy and may be more suitable for those pupils who are busy at lunchtime. The healthy mid-morning break offer will also help to mitigate lunchtime queues.

Supervision of the lunch service is currently done by either duty teaching staff or paid lunch time supervisors. One of the concerns raised by the Headteachers was that there is an invisible additional cost to them that needs to be appreciated. If lunchtimes are extended due to increased numbers, or due to additional service points opening, so does the cost of supervision.

How the impact of low Free School Meal uptake supports the school's budget.

In 2022/23 schools received £2.89, rising to £3.00 in 2023/24 for each registered FSM pupil to go towards the cost of the school meal as part of their main budget allocation. When a FSM pupil does not take up their free meal, the school benefits from any residual unused funding.

1 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The offer of UFSM to all secondary school pupils will help reduce inequalities brought on by the high cost of living. The project will also support pupils who come from households with low incomes and will therefore provide targeted support to the most vulnerable in the current cost of living crisis.

The UFSM project ensures that all pupils, regardless of race, gender, disability, sexuality or other protected characteristics have access to a daily healthy meal whilst at school. Universal high-quality provision can reduce health inequalities, support positive learning and improve behaviour for disadvantaged pupils – helping to narrow the attainment gap.

2 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Best Value Implications

The UFSM project will be monitored to ensure that schools comply with the Conditions of Grant. These will provide schools with a clear and consistent framework on how to derive maximum benefit from the policy (encouraging uptake of good quality nutritious school meals) as well as providing data to demonstrate best value for money for Tower Hamlet's investment in free school meals.

2.2 Consultations

There are no statutory consultations required in respect of this project.

2.3 Environmental (including air quality)

There are no environmental implications.

2.4 Risk Management

Risk will be managed by the Project Team and evaluations will be undertaken throughout the implementation of the project.

2.5 Crime Reduction

There are no crime reduction implications.

2.6 Safeguarding

There are no safeguarding implications.

2.7 Data Protection

There are no data protection implications.

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

3 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

An initial estimate of costs was included as a revenue growth bid in the MTFs for 2023/24 for an introduction of Meals for all Secondary Schools from September 2024, however this was based on a lower meal price as food and salary cost inflation has increased significantly since the initial scoping exercise. Initial investment costs for Schools for equipment and serving facilities detailed in this report have also been additionally identified to the initial growth bid as the project has gained substance and detail of all levels of investment.

The initial costs of investment could be met from the current allocated budget and with the possible utilisation of PFI reserves for those schools currently within a PFI contract, However if we are able to include a growth item in the Capital programme that would be a more prudent application of funds.

As there is an urgency to ordering equipment the costs involved for the early implantation schools which are far lower would be required to be met from the revenue growth.

It would be recommended that as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25 more detailed analysis of uptake, meal prices and staffing requirements would need to be reviewed as the project matures to ensure future funding is adequate.

4 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

4.1 The Council has the legal power (both in its own right and part of a wider public health function) to provide meals to attendees of it

4.2 The ability to recharge pupils for the meal provision is not mandatory and therefore the Council is legally entitled to waive recovery of the cost of the meal if it so wishes.

4.3 As the funder of the meal, the acquisition and provision of the meal is subject to the Council's statutory Best Value duty. Therefore, acquisitions for the creation of the meals (or where the meal is created by a contractor, the contractor itself) must be procured in accordance with the Best Value Duty and also to satisfy the Council's legal duties to subject its purchases to competition.

4.4 A school governing body is a contracting authority for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and is also subject to the same Best Value duty as the main body of the Council. It follows that where the Council provides funding only to the school and the school enters into a contract for the purchase of the meal or the acquisition of the meal components then the school must also subject such purchases to an appropriate level of competition.

4.5 School provision in the borough includes school places made available at free schools and academies. The Council is restricted by law from providing "maintenance" to such schools as their funding is received directly from central government. Therefore, the Council will ensure that the funding of free school meals is legally compliant at free schools and academies.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1** School Food Standards Audit
- **Appendix 2** Schedule of Equipment
- **Appendix 3** Revised Equipment & Estimated Contingency Costs
- **Appendix 4** Conditions of Grant

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

- 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

Appendix 1 School Food Compliance Audit

School Food Compliance Audit Document	Excluding morning break			Including morning break		
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Starchy food						
One or more portions of food from this group every day						
Three or more different starchy foods each week						
One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food each week						
Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than 2 days each week (applies to food served across the whole school day)						
Bread - with no added fat or oil - must be available every day						
Fruit and vegetables						
One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day						
One or more portions of fruit every day						
A dessert containing at least 50% fruit 2 or more times each week						
At least 3 different fruits, and 3 different vegetables each week						
Meat fish eggs and beans						
A portion of food from this group every day						
A portion of meat or poultry on 3 or more days each week						
Oily fish once or more every 3 weeks						
For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein 3 or more days a week						
A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once a week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools, (applies across the whole school day)						
Milk and Dairy						
A portion of food from this group every day						
Lower fat milk and lactose reduced milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours						
Foods high in fat, sugar and salt						
No more than 2 portions a week of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated (applies across the whole school day)						
No more than 2 portions of food which include pastry each week (applies across the whole school day)						
No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat (applies across the whole school day)						
Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch with fruit or vegetables or dairy food						
No confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products (applies across the whole school day)						
Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionery						
Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked (applies across the whole school day)						
Any condiments limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful. (applies across the whole school day)						
Healthy drinks						
Free, fresh drinking water at all times						
The only drinks permitted are:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plain water (still or carbonated) • lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk • fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls) • plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (for example yoghurt) drinks • combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey) • combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey • tea, coffee, hot chocolate 						
Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice.						
Categories met						
% compliance	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix 2 - Recommended Equipment

Red – Substantial implementation cost of over £60,000 per school.

Total Cost: £242,757 excluding VAT.

School	Mulberry Girls	Mulberry Stepney Green	Oaklands
Cost	£ 98,310.00	£ 72,197.00	£ 72,250.00
iCombi Classic 20 Grid 1/1 Electric	1	2	1
iVario model `L` Electric			1
Blue Seal 120 litre Bratt Pan Electric	1		
Tills	1	1	1
Fridge shelving		1	
Plates and cutlery Med	1.5		1
Pod PC cost	1	1	1
Hobart 40 L mixer	1		
Dishwasher double - Hobart	1	1	
Walk in fridge	1		1
Installation	2	2	2

Suggested Equipment

Amber – Significant implementation cost of between £20,000 and £60,000 per school.

Total cost: £203,398 excluding VAT.

School	Stepney All saints	Morpeth	Central Foundation	George Green's	Mulberry Shoreditch
Cost	£ 35,361.00	£ 35,856.80	£ 40,142.00	£ 46,078.00	£ 45,960.80
iCombi Classic 20 Grid 1/1 Electric	2			1	1
iVario model `XL` Electric					1
Foster 3 door counter fridge		3			3
Foster 2 door upright fridge				1	
Blue Seal 80 litre Bratt Pan Electric			1		
Blue Seal 120 litre Bratt Pan Electric	1	1		1	
Tills			1	1	2
Hotplate					1
Plates and cutlery Med		1	1		1.5
Pod PC cost		1	1	1	
Hobart 30 L Mixer			1		
Installation	3	1	1	2	2

Light Green – Large implementation cost between £5,000 to £20,000 per school.

Total Cost: £71,447 excluding VAT.

School	Wapping	London Enterprise	Langdon	London East Alternative	St Pauls	Bishops Challoner
Cost	£ 7,418.00	£ 11,413.00	£ 10,340.20	£ 13,449.00	£ 14,784.80	£14,042.00
iCombi Classic 20 Grid 1/1 Electric				1		
Foster 3 door counter fridge			2		3	
Foster 2 door counter freezer			1			
Foster 1 door upright freezer					1	
Foster 2 door upright fridge						1
Foster 2 door upright freezer						1
Blue Seal 80 litre Bratt Pan Electric	1				1	
Blue Seal 120 litre Bratt Pan Electric						1
Blue Seal 80 litre Bratt Pan Gas		1				
Tills		1	2			
Fridge shelving		1				
Hotplate		1				
Plates and cutlery Med			1			1
Installation	1	1	0	1	1	1

Dark Green – Minimal Implementation cost under £5,000 per school.

Total Cost: £10,424 excluding VAT.

School	Phoenix	Ian Mikardo	Mulberry UTC	Canary Wharf	Swanlea	Bow
Cost	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 500.00	£ 3,929.20	£ 5,995.00
Foster 3 door counter fridge					2	
Tills						1
Fridge shelving						1
Hotplate						1
Plates and cutlery small				1		
Plates and cutlery Large						1
Installation	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix 3 - Revised Equipment & Estimated Contingency Costs

Equipment Required	Total No	Cost Jan 2023	Sept 2023 Cost - 7% inflation	Jan / April 2024 Cost Extra 5%
iCombi Classic 20 Grid 1/1 Electric	9	£ 103,041.00	£ 110,253.87	£ 115,766.56
iVario model `L` Electric	1	£ 13,801.00	£ 14,767.07	£ 15,505.42
iVario model `XL` Electric	1	£ 18,123.00	£ 19,391.61	£ 20,361.19
Foster 3 door counter fridge	13	£ 25,539.80	£ 27,327.59	£ 28,693.97
Foster 2 door counter freezer	1	£ 2,411.00	£ 2,579.77	£ 2,708.76
Foster 1 door upright freezer	1	£ 1,473.00	£ 1,576.11	£ 1,654.92
Foster 2 door upright fridge	2	£ 4,332.00	£ 4,635.24	£ 4,867.00
Foster 2 door upright freezer	1	£ 2,413.00	£ 2,581.91	£ 2,711.01
Blue Seal 80 litre Bratt Pan Electric	3	£ 16,254.00	£ 17,391.78	£ 18,261.37
Blue Seal 120 litre Bratt Pan Electric	5	£ 32,315.00	£ 34,577.05	£ 36,305.90
Blue Seal 80 litre Bratt Pan Gas	1	£ 5,418.00	£ 5,797.26	£ 6,087.12
Tills	13	£ 19,500.00	£ 32,500.00	£ 34,125.00
Fridge shelving	3	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,605.00	£ 1,685.25
Hotplate	3	£ 5,985.00	£ 6,403.95	£ 6,724.15
Plates and cutlery small	1	£ 500.00	£ 535.00	£ 561.75
Plates and cutlery Med	8	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,560.00	£ 8,988.00
Plates and cutlery Large	1	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,140.00	£ 2,247.00
Pod PC cost	6	£ 123,000.00	£ 131,610.00	£ 138,190.50
Hobart 30 L Mixer	1	£ 9,724.00	£ 10,404.68	£ 10,924.91
Hobart 40 L mixer	1	£ 10,099.00	£ 10,805.93	£ 11,346.23
Dishwasher double - Hobart	2	£ 45,598.00	£ 48,789.86	£ 51,229.35
Walk in fridge	2	£ 40,000.00	£ 42,800.00	£ 44,940.00
Installation	20	£ 40,000.00	£ 42,800.00	£ 44,940.00
Survey and Planning for Install, 10 days maximum			£ 5,000.00	£ 5,250.00
POD Slabs and Electrics, £5k each POD			£ 30,000.00	£ 31,500.00
Softeners for Combi Ovens			£ 2,500.00	£ 2,625.00
Installation costs increasing			£ 7,000.00	£ 7,350.00
CFGs combi oven (change of contractor)			£ 16,000.00	£ 16,800.00
				£ -
TOTAL COSTS		£ 531,026.80	£ 640,333.68	£ 672,350.36
Estimated Contingency Cost allowance			£ 50,000.00	£ 50,000.00
		£ 531,026.80	£ 690,333.68	£ 722,350.36

Appendix 4 Proposed Conditions of Grant

Condition of Grant	RATIONALE and HOW TO REPORT
Provide actual take-up rates for KS3 & KS4 on a monthly basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that funding only provided to actual school meal uptake • Schools to provide monthly uptake reporting through to Finance team.
Commit to provide FSM to all those Eligible and make all efforts to maximise uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current benefits related FSM uptake is only at 50% • Annual certification statement (submitted to School Food Improvement Manager (SFIM)/ Finance Team) • School food take-up rates
Commit to spend all the grant on school lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual certification statement • Schools able to demonstrate that all funding is spent on any of the following: Food Ingredients and disposables, kitchen and other catering related staffing costs, utility costs, kitchen capital, monitoring and quality assurance.
Meet requirements of national school food standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Food Standard are variable quality • Annual certification statement asks for: • Name of senior lead teacher / governor with responsibility for school food • School Food Policy published • School conducts termly checks on menu compliance and food serving time observations. • Scheduled Environmental Health Officer / Food Safety Officer visits include question on how school monitors and reports on meeting school food standards
Sustainability Standards to be incorporated into Procurement contracts and Service level agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender specifications to be checked by School Food Improvement Manager • To discuss with Pilot schools additional potential to involve Tower Hamlets Climate change / sustainability team
Pay London Living Wage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual certification statement • Review catering contracts to ensure LLW incorporated. • Finance team to ask for compliance annually
Commitment to support evaluation of the grant each term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evaluation data to help demonstrate best value for money for Tower Hamlet's investment in free school meals.

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<p>Cabinet</p> <p>24 May 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Caroline Holland, Interim Corporate Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Q4 2022/2023 Record of Corporate Director's Actions</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living
Originating Officer(s)	William Jabang – Interim Head of Procurement
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Forward Plan Notice Published	28/03/2023
Reason for Key Decision	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>1. People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities;</p> <p>2. A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in;</p> <p>3. A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough.</p>

Executive Summary

This report sets out, for noting by Cabinet, the Corporate Director's Actions taken under Rule 10 (section 50 Record of Corporate Director's Actions (RCDA) - Waiving of Procurement Procedures) in Part C – Codes and Protocols of the Council's constitution.

The section states that Corporate Director's Actions in respect of contracts over £100,000 must be reported to Cabinet for noting and this report fulfils this requirement.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the Record of Corporate Directors' Actions set out in Appendix 1.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council's constitution requires that Corporate Director's Actions in respect of contracts over £100,000 must be reported to Cabinet for noting.
- 1.2 The regular reporting of Corporate Director's Actions should assist in ensuring that Members are able to scrutinise officer decisions.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Council is bound by its constitution to report to Cabinet financial decisions taken under Corporate Director's Actions.
- 2.2 If the Council were to deviate from those requirements, there would need to be a good reason for doing so. It is not considered that there is any such reason, having regard to the need to ensure that Members are kept informed about decisions made under the delegated authority threshold and to ensure that these decisions are in accordance with Financial Regulations.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 Section 50 of the Council's constitution "Record of Corporate Director's Actions (RCDA) - Waiving of Procurement Procedures" states that:
- 3.2 Procurement Procedures may be waived by a Corporate Director in liaison with the Head of Procurement and the Director of Legal, where the total value of the contract does not exceed the value of £213,477 incl. VAT or 177,897.50 ex. VAT (this is cumulative where there are a series of RCDA's in a period of 12 months), after considering a written report (RCDA) by the appropriate officer, that the waiver is justified because:
 - a. The nature of the market for the works to be carried out or the supplies or services to be provided has been investigated and has demonstrated that only a single source of supply is available, or
 - b. On balancing the risk and circumstances, it is clearly in the Council's interest to do so; or
 - c. The contract is for works, supplies or services that are required in circumstances of extreme urgency that could not reasonably have been foreseen – e.g. to protect life or property when no existing contractual arrangement is in place, or if the purchase is needed to urgently comply with an order of Civil or Criminal Court; or

- d. The purchase is from a supplier where there is an existing obligation to the Council (e.g. under a warranty to contribute to the cost).
 - e. Variations of contracts that do not fall within the exceptions listed in section 24.3
- 3.3 A detailed record of the Corporate Director's Actions are shown in Appendix 1.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 The comments of the Chief Financial Officer have been included on each individual decision. There are no further financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 The report sets out individual Corporate Directors' Decisions for noting by Cabinet, as required by the Constitution. Therefore, this report complies with the requirements of the Constitution.
- 5.2 Internal guidelines have been published setting out the process by which Records of Corporate Directors' Decisions are completed. These specify that the proposed decision must be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and its Procurement Procedures.
- 5.3 The specific legal implications of each of these decisions has been considered and commented upon at the time each decision was made.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Record of Corporate Director's Actions (RCDA)

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

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

- Nisar Visram, Director of Finance, Procurement & Audit
- William Jabang, Interim Head of Procurement
- Ragy Mendalawon, Procurement Analyst

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Appendix 1: Q4 Record of Corporate Director's Actions (RCDAs)

Corporate Director	Procurement Reference	Title	Amount	Contractors Name and Address	Date approved by HOP	Service Contact and Post Title	Justification for Decision
Denise Radley Corporate Director Health, Adults and Community and Deputy Chief	HAC(R)333	Community pharmacy HAC5265	£140,000	Various Pharmacies for the provision of services to deal with sexual health issues.	17/02/2023	Somen Banerjee Director of Public Health	The community pharmacy contract addresses high levels of STIs and unwanted pregnancies within the borough. A one-year extension is needed as Community pharmacies recover from the pandemic, to understand pattern of use and to develop a more integrated pathway between community pharmacies and sexual health services at Barts and in primary care. Funding for this extension comes from the Public Health grant. In addition, it will also to allow time to review the service ahead of a re-procurement for a new service from the 1st of April 2024.

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