



Meeting of the

Tower Hamlets Council

Agenda

Wednesday, 19 July 2023 at 7.00 p.m. or 15 minutes after the rise of the Extraordinary Council meeting, whichever is the later.

VENUE

Council Chamber,
Whitechapel Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road,
London E1 1BJ

Meeting Webcast

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

Democratic Services Contact:

Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services

Tel: 020 7364 4651, E-mail: matthew.mannion@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Chief Executive's Office

Democratic Services
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BJ

Tel **020 7364 4651**

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

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

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL** at **7.00 p.m.** on **WEDNESDAY, 19 JULY 2023**

Stephen Halsey
Interim Chief Executive



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

Public Information

Viewing Council Meetings

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

Meeting Webcast and Public attendance

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

Please note: It is also possible to attend meetings in person. Places in the public gallery are allocated on a first come, first served basis from the reception at the Town Hall on the day of the meeting.

Electronic agendas reports and minutes.

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

To access this, click www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee and search for the relevant committee and meeting date.

Agendas are available on the Modern.Gov, Windows, iPad and Android apps.



QR code for
smart phone
users

Public Information

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

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

The agenda for this ordinary Council meetings comprises:

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

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

How can I watch the meeting?

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

Public Attendance and Conduct at Meetings

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

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

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

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



Procedure at the meeting.

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

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

Order of business

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

Voting

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

Decisions and Minutes

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

Publication of Agenda papers.

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

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

Publication of tabled papers

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



London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Council

Wednesday, 19 July 2023

7.00 p.m.

PAGE NUMBER

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

9 - 10

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

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

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

3. MINUTES

11 - 22

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council and the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on Wednesday 17 May 2023.

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

5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

23 - 26

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

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



but not discussed.

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

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

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

7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE 27 - 30

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

8. OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE 31 - 32

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

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

9.1 Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report to Council 33 - 44

To consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee setting out their Annual Report to Council.

9.2 Report of the Corporate Parenting Board: Annual Report 2022-23 45 - 78

To consider the report from the Corporate Parenting Board setting out its Annual Report to Council.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Nil items.

11. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL 79 - 84

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



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

85 - 92

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



Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

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

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

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

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

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

Further Advice contact: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4348.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

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

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

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

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

1. ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Shafi Ahmed addressed the meeting about his time in office.

He thanked the Council, the Mayor, and elected Members for giving him the opportunity to serve as First Citizen of the Borough since May 2022.

He noted that he had made every effort to carry out his duties in a fair and impartial way, shining a light on the borough by bringing positivity and enthusiasm to the role.

His chosen charity for which he had fundraised for, was the Tower Project, which provides support to families with autistic children. He said the charity dinner event held in December 2022 had raised almost £20,000, despite this being a scaled-back event owing to the cost-of-living crisis.

Councillor Ahmed said he was honoured to serve as Speaker which was a once in a lifetime opportunity. He said of the many occasions and events he had attended the most memorable ones were:

- The late Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, which was followed a few months later with the sad news of Her Majesty passing away.
- The proclamation of the new King.
- The new King and Queen's visit to the Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Attending the Coronation Garden Tea Party; and
- Taking part in Citizenship ceremonies welcoming new citizens to the borough.

He said the Civic Awards held at the beginning of May 2023 were a resounding success and reminded everyone that nominations of next year's awards would open later in the year. He said he was privileged to be the last Speaker of the old Town Hall as well as the new Speaker of the Whitechapel Town Hall, especially as a local resident and Whitechapel ward councillor.

He thanked his Consorts for their support before expressing his condolences to the family of Suma Begum who had been tragically murdered.

He also thanked the Democratic Services Team for their unequivocal support and said he looked forward to serving his constituents and spending more time with his family.

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

- Councillor Maium Talukdar
- Councillor Kabir Ahmed
- Councillor Sirajul Islam
- Councillor Bodrul Choudhury
- Councillor Abdal Ullah
- Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury
- Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain
- Councillor Iqbal Hossain
- Councillor Ayas Miah
- Councillor Abdul Wahid
- Councillor Mufeedah Bustin
- Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled

- Councillor Peter Golds
- Councillor Amin Rahman
- Councillor Harun Miah
- Councillor Suluk Ahmed
- Councillor Kabir Hussain
- Councillor Kamrul Hussain
- Councillor Abdul Mannan
- Councillor Ohid Ahmed
- Councillor Musthak Ahmed and
- Mayor Lutfur Rahman

The Councillors praised Councillor Shafi Ahmed for his great personality, showmanship, and magnanimous attitude in overseeing Council meetings and for being an excellent role model for the community. They were in awe of his charitable work and the significant amount of money he had raised for charity.

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

ELECTION OF NEW SPEAKER

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

The following nomination was proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Jahed Choudhury be elected to serve as Speaker of the Council until May 2024.

The nomination to elect Councillor Jahed Choudhury to serve as Speaker of the Council was put to the vote and was **agreed** on a majority vote.

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Jahed Choudhury be elected to serve as Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2024.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 19:49 and reconvened at 20:04.

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury in the Chair

The incoming Speaker, Councillor Jahed Choudhury thanked the Council for electing him as Speaker and congratulated the outgoing speaker on a

successful term in office. He said he had been a fair and effective speaker. He thanked the Mayor and fellow councillors for electing him for the year ahead.

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

- Miss Maria Sultana Choudhury.
- Mr Asfar Uddin; and
- Mr Abdul Alim

The new speaker noted the residents of the borough were facing a difficult time, with the cost-of-living crisis and said it was more important than ever to work together to ensure residents were supported by creating opportunities for them through education and employment.

He expressed his sadness for hate crime perpetrated against three residents of the borough and said he wanted to ensure Tower Hamlets was a safe place for all to live, work and travel. He said he looked forward to working with everyone by fostering a positive attitude and collaborating for the good of the residents.

The Speaker of the Council expressed his condolences at the passing of Ms Jackie Odunoye, former director of housing who had passed away a few days before. He said that Ms Odunoye has worked for Tower Hamlets for many years before moving to Redbridge Council. She was a popular and well-respected officer. He asked that Council observe a minutes' silence in her honour.

The following Councillors also expressed their condolences especially as they had the good fortune of working with Ms Odunoye:

- Councillor Rachel Blake
- Councillor Ohid Ahmed
- Councillor Marc Frances
- Councillor Sirajul Islam; and
- Mayor Lutfur Rahman.

Finally, the Speaker stated his chosen charities were Eden Care UK and St Joseph's Hospice. He explained both charities worked to provide compassionate care and support for people living with life limiting illnesses.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

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

The following nominations were proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled be elected to serve as the Deputy Speaker of the Council for 2023/24.

It was **moved** by Councillor Sabina Akhtar and **seconded** by Councillor Asma Islam that Councillor Rebaka Sultana be elected to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Council for 2023/24.

The nomination to elect Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Council as the first nomination received was put to the vote and was agreed on a majority vote.

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled be elected to serve as Deputy Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council meeting in May 2024.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

Councillor Faroque Ahmed was unable to join the meeting in person but joined remotely. It was noted that he would be unable to vote as he was not formally in attendance.

4. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting held on 15th March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record save to record that Councillor Nathalie Bienfait was in attendance for the meeting.
2. Upon the amendment being noted, the Speaker be authorised to sign them accordingly.

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

There were no announcements from the Speaker or Interim Chief Executive to note.

7. MAYOR'S CABINET AND EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

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

The recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED

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

8. PROPORTIONALITY AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES ON COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2023/24

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, proposing the establishment of the Council's committees for 2023/24 and setting out the review of proportionality and the allocation of places on those Committees.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

RESOLVED:

1. Agree the review of proportionality as at Section 3 of this report and the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees for the municipal year 2023/24 as set out at Paragraph 3.7.
2. Agree to establish the Committees set out for the municipal year 2023/24, and for places to be allocated on those Committees, as set out at Paragraph 3.7.
3. As part of Recommendation 2 above, to confirm the establishment of a new Human Resources Committee with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and with a new Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of £6,526.
4. To also agree subsequent changes to the General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 2 to the report to reflect the handover of responsibilities to the Human Resources Committee.
5. Note that consequential changes to the Constitution will be required and are noted as part of the Constitution report at Agenda Item 11.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2023-24

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, regarding the appointment of members to the Council's Committees,

and Chairs where appropriate, (including those established under item 8 above). The list of nominations were circulated in a supplementary agenda however some verbal nominations were also received during the meeting and these were decided by Council.

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

Committee	Committee Chair
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Mushtak Ahmed
Audit Committee	Councillor Harun Miah
General Purposes Committee	Councillor Shafi Ahmed

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

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

RESOLVED

1. Appoint members and substitute members to the committees and sub-committees of the Council and other bodies (including Outside Bodies) for the municipal year 2023/24 as set out at Appendix 1 attached or any further nominations made at the meeting.
2. Appoint the Chairs of Committees for 2023/24 from amongst the nominations listed at Appendix 2 attached or any further nominations made at the meeting.
3. Agree that in relation to any unfilled places within the seats allocated to a particular political group, the Council note that the Director of Legal, as Monitoring Officer has delegated authority subsequently to agree the appointments to those places in accordance with nominations from the relevant political group.

10. COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2023-24

The Council considered the report setting out the calendar of meetings for the Council, Committees and other meetings for the municipal year 2023/24. In addition it was noted that the first meeting of the Human Resources Committee was scheduled for 8 June and not 25 May.

The recommendations were **agreed**.

1. Approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1 subject to the above amendment.
2. To delegate to the Monitoring Officer the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that Members agree to set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.

11. COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION 2023-24

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

The recommendations were **agreed**:

RESOLVED

1. Note the work of the General Purposes Committee throughout the year to support the Constitution.
2. Agree the addition of an amended Paragraph 11.2 of the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Paragraph 3.6 below.
3. Agree that subsequent to this meeting to further amend the Constitution with consequent factual changes required due to the establishment of the Human Resources Committee to be added after this meeting and reported to the General Purposes Committee for noting.
4. Agree to confirm the re-adoption of the Council's Constitution as set out at Appendices 1-4 to the report subject to the above amendments.

12. USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY PROCEDURES 2022/23

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

The recommendation was **agreed**.

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

The meeting ended at 9.55 p.m.

Speaker of the Council

This page is intentionally left blank

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 6.52 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Amina Ali and
- Councillor Faroque Ahmed

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Speaker **MOVED** and Councillor Talukdar **seconded** the motion to exclude the press and public for the remaining part of the meeting.

Council

RESOLVED:

1. In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda to agree:
“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.”

4. AGREE AN EXIT PAYMENT

Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled, Chair of the General Purposes Committee introduced the report which set out the process for agreeing an exit Payment for the Corporate Director of Place.

Members expressed their praise and thanks to the Corporate Director before agreeing the severance payment.


Council **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Note and approve the exit payment, including redundancy and the cost of the early payment of pension benefits, resulting from the deletion of the post as part of an organisational restructure.
- b) Note that the redundancy payment is part of the individuals' contractual terms and conditions of employment and that the early payment of pension benefits is linked to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- c) Note and approve the ex-gratia payment to compensate for non-consultation about potential redundancy.

The meeting ended at 7.03 p.m.

Speaker of the Council

Agenda Item 5

Non-Executive Report of the: Council 19 th July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Petitions to Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. This report sets out details of the valid petitions submitted for presentation and debate at this Council meeting. The text of the petitions received are set out in the attached report.
2. The Council's Constitution provides for up to four petitions to be heard at each ordinary Council meeting. These are taken in order of receipt, except that petitions for debate (those in excess of 2,000 signatures) will take precedence. Should more than four petitions be received, all remaining petitions will be listed to be formally noted by Council.
 - a. There is one petition to be heard
 - i. Asking to reconsider cuts to certain infrastructure projects
 - b. There are no petitions to be debated or noted.

PETITIONS TO BE HEARD

3. For Petitions listed as to be heard:
 - a. Petitioners may address the meeting for no more than 3 minutes.
 - b. Members may then question the petitioners for a further 4 minutes.
 - c. Finally, the speaker will invite the Mayor or (at the Mayor's discretion) the relevant Lead Member or Committee Chair to respond to the petition for up to 2 minutes. The petition will then be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will provide a written response within 28 days of the date of the meeting.
4. Members, other than a Cabinet Member or Committee Chair responding at the end of the item, should confine their contributions to questions and not make statements or attempt to debate.
5. Responses to all petitions will be sent to the lead petitioner and displayed on the Council's website.

5.1 Petition regarding cuts to certain infrastructure projects

We, the undersigned, are concerned residents of Tower Hamlets who demand the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to reverse its decision on how to spend the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding.

NCIL is a portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that is collected by the borough from new developments over a certain size. It can be used to fund local infrastructure projects that are needed to support new developments, such as schools, health services, leisure, open spaces and transport improvements.

On 21 June 2023, the Mayor in Cabinet approved a new delivery framework for NCIL funding, which splits the funding into three sub-programmes: Community Grants Programme, Capital Projects and Affordable Housing Projects. According to this framework, the Mayor in Cabinet has the power to decide which projects will receive NCIL funding and which projects will be cancelled.


We are extremely disappointed by this decision, which effectively cancels a large number of existing projects that were previously approved by the Council and supported by the community. These projects include improvements to parks, playgrounds, community centres, libraries, sports facilities, cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings. These projects are vital for our local area and our well-being.

We believe that this decision is undemocratic and unfair. It disregards the views and needs of the local communities and prioritises the Mayor's agenda over ours. It also contradicts the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which states that the Council should consult with the community on how best to spend the NCIL funding.

We therefore call on the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to reverse its decision on how to allocate NCIL funding and to reinstate the cancelled projects. We want to see our NCIL funding used to deliver local infrastructure improvements that are chosen by residents, not by the Mayor alone.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 19 th July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motion for debate submitted by the Administration	

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

SUMMARY

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

MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE – ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE – MOTION ON YOUNG TOWER HAMLETS

Proposed by: Cllr Maium Talukdar
Seconded by: Cllr Bodrul Choudhury

This Council notes:

- That Mayor Lutfur Rahman, in his previous term as Mayor, oversaw a huge investment of resources into the borough's youth services – taking young people off the street, giving them educational, cultural, recreational, wellbeing and employment opportunities, and preparing them for adult life.
- The chronic cuts to, neglect and underfunding of, Tower Hamlets' youth services during the terms of the previous administration, which resulted in the closure of 70% of all youth centres and attendant services in the borough.
- That various studies – (set out below) – outline the correlation between access (or lack thereof) to youth services for young people and increased levels of crime and ASB, as well as low educational attainment and decreased job opportunities.

Links to External Reports/Websites

Social Mobility Commission 2019:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

APPG on Knife Crime and Violence Reduction: *Securing a brighter future: The role of youth services in tackling knife crime*, 2020

<http://www.preventknifecrime.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Securing-a-brighter-future-the-role-of-youth-services-in-tackling-knife-crime-v.2.pdf>

ONS 2021 – Child Poverty and Education Outcomes by Ethnicity

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/uksectoraccounts/compendium/economicreview/february2020/childpovertyandeducationoutcomesbyethnicity>

- That this latter point is particularly true in the youngest and most densely-populated borough in the country, where green space is scarce for many communities.
- That children from lower income households often have worse educational outcomes. A 2021 report found that those children from poorer households and without access to a decent education and extra-curricular activities end up with significant gaps in academic achievement – especially those from BAME backgrounds.
- That young people in Tower Hamlets have suffered because of the previous administration's cuts.

This Council believes:

- That the young people of Tower Hamlets deserve the best opportunities to excel, both inside and outside of the classroom.


- That every ward in Tower Hamlets should have a dedicated youth centre, where children and young people can access services to help them develop skills, as well as their interests and aspirations.
- That a serious (re-)investment in capital, personnel, and infrastructure is required to deliver these ambitions.
- That the launch of the Mayor's *Young Tower Hamlets (YTH)* scheme earlier this week (Monday 17th July) – in which a £13.7million per annum investment in the borough's redesigned youth service and a guaranteed youth centre in every ward were showcased – represents a drastic change in the Council's approach, and a firm commitment to the future of the borough's young people.
- That this investment will provide jobs, intern and apprenticeship opportunities for young people across the borough.
- That this investment will also help tackle inequalities faced by disabled and SEN young people in the borough; it will also provide women and girls with increased safe access to sporting, educational, and cultural services previously cut.
- That the work of the Deputy Mayor and Council Officers should be particularly recognised in helping to deliver this key Mayoral priority.
- That this scheme represents the insourcing of another key service in the borough, enhancing democratic accountability and control, and symbolising a key step in accelerating education and attainment in Tower Hamlets.

This Council resolves:

- To approve and endorse the Mayor and Council's newly launched service, *Young Tower Hamlets*, and recognise the huge benefits it will have on the borough's young people and families.
- To commend Officers and the Lead Member for their work in delivering this project.
- To support officers in the delivery of this key service moving forward.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 19 th July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motion for debate submitted by an Opposition Group	

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

SUMMARY

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

MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

Motion on Women's Safety

Proposed by: Cllr Sabina Khan


Seconded by: Cllr Rebeka Sultana

This Council notes:

- That many women and girls in Tower Hamlets face harassment, assault and violence in public and private spaces, which affects their freedom, dignity and wellbeing.
- That Tower Hamlets has very high levels of domestic abuse and sexual offences reported to the police, as well as 14 domestic homicides since 2011.
- In Tower Hamlets on average 6000 Domestic abuse incidents reported to the police each year.
- Last year 2,082 sexual offences were reported, of that 1348 were non rape offences and 734 rape offences.
- That improving women's safety is the responsibility of everyone, especially men, and requires more action from the Council and its partners.

This Council resolves to:

- Launch a public advertising campaign to raise awareness and challenge violence against women and girls, and to communicate the Council's commitment to women's safety using council communications and the public relations departments of partner agencies. The campaign should also promote positive messages about consent, respect and healthy relationships, and encourage bystander intervention.
- Strengthen the enforcement partnership between the Council, the Police and other agencies, and use innovative anti-social behaviour legislation to fine individuals who harass and cat-call women on our streets. The partnership should also work to improve the reporting, investigation and prosecution of domestic abuse and sexual offences, and provide specialist training for frontline staff.
- Increase the visibility and effectiveness of CCTV cameras across the borough and inform residents of their locations and operation. Ensure that CCTV operators monitor lone individuals, particularly women, during the night and early hours of the morning. The Council should also explore the use of other technologies, such as street lighting, alarms and apps, to enhance women's safety in public spaces.
- Organise women's safety community meetings to connect residents with the Council and the Police, and to address their concerns and suggestions on how to improve women's safety in Tower Hamlets. The meetings should also provide opportunities for women and girls to share their experiences, access support services and participate in co-designing solutions.

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Full Council</p> <p>19th July 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Sharon Godman Director Strategy, Transformation and Improvement</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	<p>Sharon Godman Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance</p> <p>Afazul Hoque Head of Service, Corporate Strategy and Communities</p> <p>Filuck Miah Senior Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Communities</p>
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the work that Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), it's sub-committees and scrutiny leads delivered in 2022-23 municipal year

Recommendations:

The Full Council is recommended to:

1. Agree to note the Annual Report to Council.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

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

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

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

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The council's constitution requires OSC to report annually to the Council, evidencing the committees' activities during the past year and include the work of its sub-committees.
- 3.2 The attached slide deck report provides a summary of the range of activities and work that scrutiny carried out last municipal year. OSC developed a video annual report¹ to increase its reach to the wider community of the borough, raise the profile the council's scrutiny process and promote opportunities for residents to get involved.
- 3.3 OSC and its sub-committees focused its scrutiny on areas of strategic priorities to ensure residents concerns were reflected. OSC kept oversight of the council's budget and submitted four recommendations² for the council's budget, MTFs and strategic performance throughout the year. OSC carried out two key scrutiny reviews focussing on current boroughwide issues including women's safety and the cost-of-living challenge on food insecurity in the borough³ which considered the extent to which food poverty is affecting residents and contributing factors and made a number of recommendations.
- 3.4 OSC also held spotlights examining topics of residents' concerns such as customer services improvements, the performance on delivering waste and recycling services, climate emergency, streets and parks cleanliness and the Mayor and Cabinet Member spotlights. The committee also reviewed the progress of service action plans covering air quality, swimming provision in the borough and parking.
- 3.5 The Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee (CESSC) scrutinised key areas such as the progress on improvements for Youth Justice Service and youth provision in increasing capacity for girls, plans to increase educational attainment and council's progress against the statement of action for the SEND inspection in 2021. CESSC carried out a few site visits to better understand key issues including visiting local school, meeting care experience young people and foster carers. CESSC held a scrutiny challenge session and considered how the council and its partners can improve women and girls' access and participation with sports and physical activities in the borough. The sub-committee made six recommendations in its report⁴ which is appended in presentation report.
- 3.6 The Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HASSC) focussed its scrutiny attention on resident issues such as improving access to GP services, performance of adults dental and oral health, BAME inequalities access to mental health services, tackling obesity and ASC inspection preparations. HASSC also carried out a scrutiny review, focusing on the

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/Scrutiny-Annual-Report-2022-23>

² [OSC budget scrutiny report 2023-24](#)

³ [Scrutiny Review: Understanding the impact of food insecurity on residents and review whether the council and its partners response to tackling food poverty is effective and sustainable](#)

⁴ [CESSC Report on Increasing Women and Girls' Access and Participation with Sports and Physical Activities in the Borough](#)

workforce shortages across the health and care sector and made a number of recommendations for improvement outlined in its report⁵

- 3.7 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee focussed on scrutinising reviewing the approach and support for homeless applications and held spotlights covering topics such as parking on estates, approach to regeneration, Change in Private Sector Tenants rights and developing a new local plan. HRSSC held a scrutiny challenge session⁶ the proposed consultation to bring housing management service back in house.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Having an appreciation and understanding the challenge and implications of the cost of living of residents and reducing inequalities and promoting cohesion are all central to the work of the OSC. A number of scrutiny reviews and challenge session incorporated equality consideration such as improving women's safety, increasing access to women and girls' access to sports and physical activities and the challenge of food insecurity on residents (with protected characteristics) and the council and its partners response draws on the council's statutory duty of meeting its public sector equality duty.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial arising from the recommendations in this report

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 This report complies with the Council's constitutional requirements.
7.2 There are no other legal issues arising directly from this report

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23

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

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

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

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

⁵ [HASSC Scrutiny Review on Workforce Shortages Across the Health and Care Sector](#)

⁶ [THH Consultation Challenge Session](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23

I am pleased to introduce this year's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) annual report 2022-23. This provides a summary of the activities undertaken by OSC and its Sub-Committees.

With a new political administration in place since May 2022, who began the year by setting new strategic goals and ambitions for the council, such as tackling the cost-of-living crisis as many residents continue to face a squeeze on living standards and high inflation and high energy costs, OSC and its Sub-Committees focused its scrutiny on areas of strategic priority to ensure resident concerns were reflected.

Significantly, we reviewed the council's proposed budget 2023-24 that sets out an ambitious plan to protect residents in time of hardship, fund the delivery of key services and introduce investments to support social and local economic change.

OSC held key scrutiny spotlights on issues such as the challenges around waste services and level of recycling in the borough. We held a spotlight with the new borough commander, and examined his priorities focussing on some of the issues that residents have raised such as women's safety and seeking reassurance how the police

Chair's Foreword

intends to rebuild the relationship with the community.

OSC reviewed budget and policy items and fed into policy development, including Youth Justice Annual Plan and council's statutory responsibility on Gambling Policy.

We also held spotlights on Customer Services, reviewing the progress and improvements made to date.

We focussed on the environment and held a spotlight Climate Emergency and Street and Parks Cleanliness. As part of ongoing governance, we reviewed the progress of service action plans on air quality, swimming provision in the borough and parking.

Our committee has developed a short film to present some of the highlights that the OSC and its scrutiny Sub-Committees focused on. I encourage you all to view this film and find out more about our work and how you can get involved in Scrutiny.

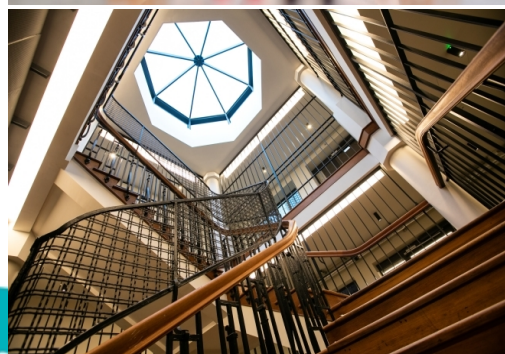
<https://tinyurl.com/Scrutiny-Annual-Report-2022-23>

Finally, I'd like to thank my committee Members, officers and partners who have contributed and supported scrutiny during the year. I hope this report helps you to understand the work and value of scrutiny.



**Cllr Musthak Ahmed, Chair of
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**





Highlights

- 25 Scrutiny Meetings (including Sub-Committees)
- 24 Scrutiny Spotlights
- 3 Scrutiny Reviews and 2 Challenge Sessions
- 2 Call ins
- 28 OSC Action requests
- 37 Recommendations across all Committees
- 3 Tracking recommendations reports
- Site visits included Bywaters Materials Recycling Facility, Food Banks in Tower Hamlets, Refuge for Domestic Violence Victims, Care leavers Through Care Services and Foster Carers, GP practices and Royal London Hospital,

Scrutiny of Council's Budget

OSC made the following recommendations to the Mayor In Cabinet consideration:

Recommendation 1 Devise a financial strategy that delivers a sustainable budget without the need to rely on reserves

Recommendation 2 Provide the pro formas detailing growth and saving proposals in sufficient time for OSC to review as part of its budget scrutiny

Recommendation 3 Explore increasing Education Maintenance Allowance for those children above the threshold – even if only temporary during the cost-of-living crisis

Recommendation 4 Review funding arrangements for Resident Support Scheme.

For more details on the scrutiny of the council's budget and to read the full report please see below:

[OSC budget scrutiny report 2023-24](#)





Page 40

Key Activities

The Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee (CESSC) held several spotlights focusing on improvements for Youth Justice Service, plans to help increase educational attainment, and reviewed the council's progress against the statement of action for the SEND Inspection in 2021

The Sub-Committee also reviewed the performance of Youth Provision and increasing capacity for girls.

The Sub-Committee also undertook a number of site visits through the year to better understand the key issues and challenges of the borough. This included visiting local schools, meeting care leavers, foster carers for social care demand and SEND young people.

The Sub-Committee held a scrutiny challenge session which considered how the council and its partners can improve

women and girls' access and participation with sports and physical activities in the borough.

The committee made the six following recommendations on community engagement, affordability, campaign and publicity, female friendly infrastructure, quality monitoring and intelligence capture and audit and women and girls' safe routes to sports provision and physical Activities.

For more details on the scrutiny of the scrutiny challenge session see below:

[CESSC Report on Increasing Women and Girls' Access and Participation with Sports and Physical Activities in the Borough](#)

Committee



**Cllr Bodrul Choudhury,
Chair of Children and
Education Scrutiny Sub-**





Page 41

Key Activities

The Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HASSC) held several spotlights including Integrated Care Systems delivery plans, improving access to GP services, and the performance of Adult Oral and Dental Health. Reviewing Black Asian Multi-Ethnic inequalities on access to mental health services.

The Sub-Committee also undertook a scrutiny review examining the issues around work force shortages across the health and care workforce sector in the borough and identified several issues including:

- The impact of cost of living and the pressures on doctors, nurses and other health professionals
- Recruitment processes often being bureaucratic Ageing workforce and the perceptual challenges of the sector not having parity particularly in social care
- A lack of clear data on workforce

projections required to meet the demand

- Lack of collaboration between the health and local education establishments to promote careers with the health sector
- Communications campaigns used to drive recruitment and engage the community with opportunities

The Sub-Committee also undertook a number visits to GP services to understand the issues with access to appointments. Members also engaged with ASC practice week to understand hospital discharging services.

The Sub-Committee was also represented at

quarterly Inner Northeast London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (INEL JHOSC), reviewing some of the regional issues faced

including ones that impact Tower Hamlets such as the workings of the Integrated Care System and its decision making.

For more details on scrutiny review:

[HASSC Scrutiny Review on Workforce Shortages Across the Health and Care Sector](#)



**Cllr Ahmodur Khan,
Chair of Health and
Adults Scrutiny Sub-
Committee**





Key Activities

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HRSSC) focussed their attention on reviewing the approach and support for homeless applications, and held spotlights covering topics such as parking on estates, approach to regeneration, Change in Private Sector Tenants rights and Developing a new local plan

The HRSSC held a scrutiny challenge session which considered the proposed consultation to bring housing management service back in house.

The challenge session help to identify the following recommendations:

The term ‘ tenancy’ be added before conditions to make It clear to residents that there will be no change to their

tenancy conditions

All questions to be asked of residents should include the options of a third possible response either: ‘ Don’t know’ Not sure or ‘Undecided’

That the Frequently Ask Questions (FAQ) should emphasise the accountability for continuous improvement of service delivery in the new proposals,

that consultation with the staff of THH will need to be part of this process and to get the most out of the consultation, the council should consider using telephone surveys to garner residents’ views.

More details on the challenge session report findings is below: [THH Consultation Challenge Session](#)

Cllr Abdul Mannan Chair of Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee





Key Activities

The economic downturn had a profound impact on residents already impacted by rising energy prices, inflation and cost of living crisis.

As scrutiny lead for Finance and Resources, I held a scrutiny review on food insecurity in the borough.

The review focussed on understanding the extent to which food poverty is affecting residents and contributing factors,

Also considered current food model provisions and accessibility, and how sustainable the council's plans to tackle the issues are. The review led, itself to engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders, including those who received support from food banks. It also offered opportunity to undertake site visits to understand the context and demand.

The scrutiny review led to the following

themes for recommendations:

- Improving communication on support provisions, developing an up to date, directory of accessible services
- Make longer term funding commitment for LBTH food hubs.
- Support growth and sustainability of independent food aid networks
- Develop dignified approaches to access food
- Opening up food aid provisions in evening and weekends
- Improving quality of secondary school food provision
- Work with foodbanks to improve nutritional value
- Improving residents' employment opportunities to better employment
- Develop relations to private sector

to secure funding to tackle food insecurity

More details on the Scrutiny review report:

[Scrutiny Review: Understanding the impact of food insecurity on residents and review whether the council and its partners response to tackling food poverty is effective and sustainable](#)



Cllr Sabina Khan
Scrutiny Lead for
Finance and Resources





Key Activities

As the scrutiny lead for Environment and Community Safety, I carried out a number of estate walkabouts with the cabinet lead member and local police to understand some of the key issues on community safety

Over the last few years women safety has come to light becoming a significant issue for the borough

I held a scrutiny review, examining the level of provision and support for women safety, this included undertaking a site visit to one of the main women's refuge to better understand some of the challenges and barriers that victims of domestic abuse and violence (DV) face

The scrutiny review considered the level of support for DV victims as this was significantly reported to the police in Tower Hamlets

The review also considered some of the challenges women face in feeling safe in public spaces and with the night-time economy

The review led to a few recommendations and include areas such as:


- Increasing school' capacity on raising DV awareness and available support
- Review current funding arrangements and increase capacity to support women's group
- Greater collaboration to improve women awareness programmes and support available for street safety
- Improve provision for women self defence
- Police to target its recruitment and retention focusing on representation

- Council and RSL to collaborate on women safety issues on RSL estates
- Councillors supporting and promoting and championing 'more male allies' agenda



Cllr Abdul Malik
Scrutiny Lead for
Environment and
Community Safety



<p>Council</p> <p>19.07.23</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children and Culture</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022-23</p>	

Proposed Decision Path (indicate) – Delete Section Before Publication:

	Step [Delete as applicable]	Date
DLT Level (Tier One)	DLT / CD	15.05.23
CLT Level (Tier Two)	CLT / CE	20.06.23
Member Level (Tier Three)	MAB / 121	26.06.23
Decision (Tier Four)	Council / IMD	19.07.23

Proposed Decision Path (indicate) – Delete Section Before Publication:

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdar, Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Originating Officer(s)	Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer (Children & Culture)
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	N/A
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	1. A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills

Executive Summary

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022 to 2023 sets out the purpose of the board, how it functions in Tower Hamlets, what has been achieved over the last year, and how corporate parenting priorities are being taken forward for the council and partners.

THIS SECTION TO BE DELETED BEFORE PUBLICATION

Decision Type

Key Decision?	Urgent Decision?	Exempt from Call-In?	Restricted Report or Partially Restricted (e.g. appendix)?
No	No	No	No

*If the answer is yes make sure the forthcoming decision on the website states this or else the decision cannot be taken.

Guidance Documents

Further details on the procedure for Urgent Decisions can be found in the [Intranet Library](#) and the Guide to Report Writing [guidance note](#).

Specific Issues for Pre-Decision Meetings

(Officers may use the following table to add points of note for internal meetings such as CLT, MAB or DMTs. Content can be deleted at any stage and, in any case, will be before publication for the decision making meeting.)

Directorate Leadership Team
Corporate Leadership Team
Mayor's Advisory Board
Communications

THIS SECTION TO BE DELETED BEFORE PUBLICATION

Council is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Not applicable

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report is part of a range of work being led by the council which is focused on strengthening and developing our corporate parenting ethos. Several reports are being taken to committees during July 2023 to provide information on progress, plans and proposals for the future. These are:

- Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022 – the subject of this report.
- Corporate Parenting Strategy – A 5 year strategy is under development. The strategy will provide a 'Pledge' (a set of commitments that all stakeholders to sign up to) priorities and an action plan to steer the work of the council and partners. The focus will be on ensuring that the children we care for and care experienced young people have every opportunity to develop, realise their aspirations and thrive. Details in the 'Corporate Parenting Commitments' report (as per next line) will help shape the action plan within the strategy.
- Corporate Parenting Commitments – This report puts forward proposals for commitments the local authority can make as 'corporate parents' to improve experiences and outcomes for children in our care and care experienced young people. This includes adopting 'Care Experienced' as a Protected Characteristic (as recommended in the Independent Care Review) to tackle inequality for our young people. The proposals within this report will align with the Corporate Parenting Strategy for Tower Hamlets.

- 3.2 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) demonstrates our continuing commitment to the corporate parenting principles and shows how we deliver on them across many partnerships and services. The board meets

on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council.

- 3.3 Alongside the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues. The board is able to take a strategic approach to the experiences of children looked after and care leavers and work with partners to continually develop and strengthen practice in relation to our corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 3.4 The CPB Annual Report 2022-23 provides information on a wide range of achievements including:
- Building stronger links between Foster Carers and Young People's Services to help support increased membership for the Children Living in Care Council Groups. Including though 'Chat & Chai' meetings on the first Thursday of each month.
 - Delivery of CLICC Summer Programme - a 4 week programme of events that young people were involved in devising. Opportunities included Sea Cadet activities, an Escape Room and a BBQ.
 - Councillor engagement with over 30 young people through an informal meeting, focused on issues they wanted to raise, in March 2023.
 - Awards ceremony for Foster Carers and events throughout the year for carers and children, including a trip to the beach, a musical, theatre and picnic.
 - A level attainment that enabled university entrance for some of our Virtual School students, including to Kings College London, Royal Holloway University, and the University of East London.
 - Work to implement 'child focused language and reporting' as a response to feedback from children which is aimed at being more personal and engaging for our young people.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are

required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

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

5.2 There are no other specific statutory implications.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

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

7.2 Statutory guidance 'Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers' (February 2018) sets out how these principles should be applied.

7.3 Although the creation and maintenance of a Corporate Parenting Board is not a statutory requirement, it is suggested as good practice in the guidance. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to do anything which is calculated to facilitate the discharge of any of its functions. The matters referred to in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022-23

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture



Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022/23

Contents

Foreword	2
Children in our care and care experienced young people in Tower Hamlets	3
Governance	4
Membership	6
Development of a Corporate Parenting Strategy for Tower Hamlets	7
Engagement and involvement of children we care for care experienced young people	8
Role of Foster Carers	10
Key achievements in 2022/23	12
Case Studies	19
Appendix A: Membership list for the Corporate Parenting Board	21
Appendix B: Corporate Parenting Board meetings and agendas 2022/23	22
Appendix C: Children's Social Care key performance indicator report extract March 2023	23

Foreword

Welcome to the annual report for the Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board. The board provides strategic oversight to review progress and drive forward work with our children, ensuring that our corporate parenting responsibilities are fulfilled and outcomes for our children and young people are improved.

During the last year we have continued to strengthen how the board operates. Following the elections of May 2022 new members joined and we have reviewed overall membership from the council and partners to ensure we consistently make progress on our priorities.

The voices and experiences of our children are at the heart of everything the board does. The board has always been a place where young people engage directly with senior leaders and council members and we have made further improvements to how this works in the last year. The involvement of our children starts earlier so that they have more time to consider their feedback on specific topics ahead of each meeting with the support of lead officers and board members. This has led to more in-depth discussions before and during board meetings and greater involvement of young people in planning how we can respond and improve services and support.

Our annual report provides an overview of progress made during the last year, as well as plans for the future, especially via the development of a Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Some of the achievements we are most proud of for 2022/23 include GCSE results that are higher than the national average for care experienced children, 'A' level results which enabled university entrance for some Virtual School students, and a programme of inspirational enrichment opportunities. We have also strengthened how we involve our children with more opportunities for them to engage directly with Elected Members, Senior Managers, and council officers, and be involved in the development and commissioning of services.

Looking forward, areas we are focused on for improvement include increasing education, employment and training opportunities, supporting good emotional wellbeing and mental health, and ensuring our children feel well-equipped for making their voices heard and getting involved.

We hope you find this report helpful, and it inspires you to think about the ways in which you can play a part in supporting our children to thrive and have the best experiences possible.



**Councillor Maium Talukdar,
Cabinet Member for Education,
Youth and Lifelong Learning and
Chair of the Corporate
Parenting Board**

The children we care for and care experienced young people

Children Looked After

301 children were looked after by the local authority (at end of Mar 2023 – this was 334 for Mar 2022)

Under 5	47
5 to 9	48
10 to 15	92
16 to 17	114

2023
2022
2021
2020
2019
2018
2017
2016
2015
2014

There were 31 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) (at end of Mar 2023 - this was 67 at Mar 2022)

- ‘Children Looked After’ long term placement stability 55% (end of Mar 2023 - this was 65% at Mar 2022)
- Average no. of placement moves 1.6 (end of Mar 2023 - this was 1.6 at Mar 2022)

Accommodation

94% of allocated care experienced young people were in suitable accommodation (at end of Mar 2023 - this was 84% at Mar 2022)

Care experienced young people

At 31st March 2023 the Through Care Service was working with a cohort of 457 young people, between the ages of 14 – 25 (this was 455 at Mar 2022)

Health

89% of ‘Children Looked After’ had an annual health check within 12 months (end Mar 2023 – this was 97% at Mar 2022)

93% of ‘Children Looked After’ had an annual dental check within 12 months (end Mar 2023 - this was 82% at Mar 2022)

Education, Training and Employment

75% of pupils making expected progress (autumn term 2022/23 - this was 68% for autumn term 2021/22)

98% of pupils had a personal education plan meeting during the term (autumn term 2022/23 - this was 96% for autumn term 2021/22)

95% of allocated care experienced young people had a pathway plan (end of Mar 2023 - this was 97% at Mar 2022)

77% of allocated care experienced young people were in employment, education or training (end of Mar 2023 - this was 64% at Mar 2022)

Governance

The national strategic context

The **Independent Review of Children’s Social Care** (published in May 2022)¹ examined the needs, experiences and outcomes of the children supported by social care and put forward recommendations for system changes.

In February 2023 the government published its implementation strategy and consultation **Stable Homes, Built on Love**². The strategy responds to the independent review and focuses on providing nurturing, stable and loving homes for children in care and care experienced young people.

In December 2022 Ofsted announced the introduction of a **new judgement for care experienced young people** to the framework for inspecting local authority children’s services (ILACS)³. The new judgement will focus on experiences and progress of care experienced young people. This will include consideration of whether local authorities are making good decisions for care experienced young people, and what they are doing to support them into adulthood.

¹ [Independent review of children's social care: final report](#)

Legal Context

The **Children and Social Work Act 2017** (Section 1) sets out seven corporate parenting principles which local authorities must have regard to for children looked after or care experienced young people. In February 2018 the statutory guidance for local authorities **Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care experienced young people**⁴ was published.

The guidance puts forward the critical question for local authorities as the corporate parent should be *‘would this be good enough for my child?’* They also highlight that children in our care have the same needs – to be loved, cared for and feel safe - as other children.

The corporate parenting principles

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

² [Children's social care: stable homes, built on love - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [Ofsted new judgement for care experienced young people](#)

⁴ [Applying corporate parenting principles guidance](#)

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The statutory guidance on applying the principles also makes clear that when the ethos around corporate parenting is strong “everyone from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were their own.’ We consistently look for ways to promote the interests of our children across the organisation and beyond, so that we can engage maximum support in delivering on our responsibilities. Following this approach, we always take our annual report to full Council.

Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

The Corporate Parenting Board, chaired by the Lead Member (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning) provides strategic oversight to review and drive forward our work with children in our care and care experienced young people, ensuring that our corporate parenting responsibilities are fulfilled. The board meets quarterly and includes representatives from internal council departments and wider multi-agency partners ensuring cross-collaboration and shared decision making.

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

The diagram on page 5 sets out the membership of the board and a full list is provided at Appendix A. Appendix B provides an overview of the topics covered in CPB meetings during 2022/23.

Membership of the Corporate Parenting Board



Developing a Corporate Parenting Strategy for Tower Hamlets

The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Strategy aims to set out how we will work to ensure that children in our care and care experienced children have every opportunity to develop, realise their aspirations and thrive.

The strategy will include a 'Pledge' (a set of commitments for all stakeholders to sign up to) priorities and an action plan to steer the work of the council and partners.

A Steering Group was set up in Autumn 2022 to help guide the development of the strategy through monthly meetings. The Corporate Parenting Board is provided with regular updates to overseeing progress.

The involvement of children and young people was sought at an early stage. A series of discussion workshops were held during the Spring 2023 Half Term which focused on what matters most to them and what they would like to see in the future. A set of 'key messages', articulating what is fundamentally important to children and young people, have been developed and reviewed with young

people. Alongside a review of all feedback from young people over the last 12-18 months, this work is forming the foundation of the strategy.

A wide range of consultation events and meetings with stakeholders is taking place in Spring 2023 and the draft will be reviewed and refined with feedback before going to Cabinet in July 2023.



Engagement and involvement of children we care for care experienced young people

Throughout the last year we have broadened how we engage with our children and young people through a variety of events and forums. These activities have been focused on increasing opportunities for our children to get involved and have their voices heard.

The Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) Groups

The groups have expanded their membership in 2022/23 and further developed how they address issues through appointing leads for specific themes. Alongside a Chair and Deputy Chair there are now the following roles:

- Lead for Independent Living – exploring ways to support young people to be better prepared to live independently in good quality accommodation
- Lead for improved access to employment, education and training opportunities
- Lead for Safety & Security – finding more ways to help young people feel safe, secure and stable in their life
- Lead for Health & Wellbeing – improving access to services and support
- Lead for Financial Independence – ensuring young people finance and budgeting skills they need

Building stronger links with Foster Carers

Young People’s Services have been working closely with Foster Carers during the last year and have introduced ‘Chat & Chai’ meetings on the first Thursday of each month. A trip is also being planned for May 2023 to bring together Foster Carers, their children and members of the Junior CLICC Group to continue developing and strengthening relationships.

CLICC Summer Programme

Our care experienced young people took part in a 4 week summer programme in 2022. All of the CLICC Groups were involved in devising what would be on offer which ultimately included Sea Cadet activities, an Escape Room and a BBQ.

These activities encouraged the making of new friends, including through bringing together care experienced young people and young carers. Young people were challenged by taking part in team building activities which helped to further develop communication and interpersonal skills.

The CLICC Senior Group has reviewed and refreshed their weekly sessions, moving to a more structured approach with themed activities. These include:

- More support for reading, writing and speaking
- Job searching skills, CV writing and interview techniques
- Preparing for independent living and budgeting
- Support on housing & immigration issues

CLICC Group members have also been essential participants in the work to develop the Corporate Parenting Strategy. They took part in the Spring Half Term workshops, which were hosted at Haileybury Youth Centre, and will continue to be instrumental in taking the strategy through the next phase of development.

Councillor engagement with young people

Councillors came to meet over 30 care experienced young people at Kitcat Terrace in March 2023. A wide-ranging discussion took place exploring topics and raising questions on subjects such as the cost of living crisis and preparing for adulthood. Ways forward on a number of issues were identified, such as securing a representative from the Dept of Work & Pensions to provide further guidance to young people.

Just4U Event (July 2022)

This event was planned by staff and representatives from several teams and organisations including social work teams, the Virtual

School, Young People's Service, Foster Carers Association, and Barnardo's. It was designed as a fun day for children and young people who are in our care and aged 8 to 17 years old.

A range of activities were on offer including jewellery making, face painting, bouncy castle, football and a games room. The relaxed and unstructured approach helped to build connections and develop relationship for participants. The day was also an opportunity for children and young people to share their views in an informal setting. Feedback was shared at the CPB and is informing plans for services, as well as how future events can be even more successful.

Several attendees at the Just4U event decided to try joining a Children Living in Care Council Groups which will help them to stay connected with other care experienced children.

Role of Foster Carers

Tower Hamlets Foster Carers' Association (FCA)

The independent Tower Hamlets FCA has been running for 18 years and continues to work closely with the council, providing feedback on services and advice, guidance and support for carers.

The TH FCA committee meets monthly to advocate and negotiate with the Fostering Service and to be a voice for the carer community on all issues affecting members. Foster Carers Support Group meetings are held regularly with morning and evening sessions which are co-facilitated by the TH FCA and Fostering Development Team. These are well attended and provide opportunities for carers to share their experiences and offer advice. The TH FCA manage any issues raised, seeking a response or resolution, and feeding back outcomes to members.

The TH FCA are also dedicated to promoting fostering and act as ambassadors in the recruitment of new carers. Three of the committee members regularly help facilitate the 'Skills to Foster' workshop groups and four members serve as mentors.

Each year they arrange several exciting trips and activities for foster carers and children. During 2022-2023, the following events were arranged:

- Day trip to Margate – 52 carers and children took part in fun on the beach, the amusement park, and a surprise visit from the Head of the Virtual School
- Frozen the Musical – 75 foster carers and children enjoyed a sing-along
- Picnic at the Park – games, bouncy castle, and food was enjoyed by 160 fostering families, children and staff
- Greenwich Theatre – 120 carers and children had fun watching the pantomime 'Robin Hood'

Foster Carers' Award Ceremony

The annual foster carers awards took place on the 28 April 2023 with speeches from senior managers and the Deputy Mayor. Awards were given to carers who have successfully attended training, to those achieving long service milestones and to eight carers who have made an outstanding contribution in making a difference to children's lives.



Tower Hamlets Fostering Service

The service has been busy implementing an ambitious recruitment strategy which includes the development of a specialist foster carer scheme to provide a family home environment to children at risk of exploitation, rather than a residential placement.

The service is also working with the housing directorate to support current fostering households secure additional bedroom space for foster children. This is being done by helping adult children, within fostering households, to move to their own accommodation.

The benefits package for foster carers has been reviewed and improved to help retain existing foster carers and attract more people to consider fostering. A wide range of recruitment and promotion activities have been carried out to increase the number of foster carers. Foster Care Fortnight (from 15 May 2023) will see some video clips with our foster carers being shared on Council communication channels, alongside staff going out and about to promote opportunities.

Key achievements in 2022/23

The Children Living in Care Council ‘Wishlist’

- The table below shows an update on progress during 2022/23 against items on feedback on priorities from the Children Living in Care Council (their ‘wishlist’).
- The items on the wishlist have informed the development of the new Corporate Parenting Strategy. They were a key part of the review of all feedback shared with us (as described on page 7). The strategy will show what we are doing next to respond further to what our children have told us they want to see happening.

‘Wishlist’ item	Update for 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating wrap around services – identifying gaps in service delivery and exploring how feedback from young people can be embedded in practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Corporate Parenting Board meeting now has a theme so that agendas can be planned further in advance and explore topics in detail. The themes are set by the board members for the year ahead. There is consultation with young people in advance of each meeting to explore their views on the themes being covered. They then presented their feedback to the board for discussion. This has helped increase opportunities for the views of young people to inform service planning and delivery, including identification of any gaps. • Other ways in which feedback from children has been influencing services, and the way that professionals work, has included use of feedback from events designed for engagement (such as the ‘Just4U’ event in July 2022) and work with our children to make social care documents and records more ‘child friendly’ led by Independent Reviewing Officers.

‘Wishlist’ item	Update for 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening joined-up approach to transitions – working with young people to find ways to make transitions smoother in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our ‘Pathway Planning’ is a key part of how we actively support our young people to manage transitions and achieve their future goals. We provide guidance to young people as they navigate the transition into adulthood through their pathway plan and we are consistently ensuring that our young people have a plan in place which is regularly updated. Our Education, Training and Employment Advisor also offers specialist support and provides information and advice to ensure smooth access to services based on aspirations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating CLICC Ambassadors Scheme – to represent children looked after and care leavers by advocating for them and being their voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) Groups continue to provide children and young people with opportunities to actively participate and ensure their voices are heard. Each group is designed for a different age range and they all help foster a sense of belonging, encourage participation, and promote positive relationships among young people. The Senior CLICC Group (for 18 to 25 year olds) now has a Chair, Deputy Chair and leads for specific issues. Young people within these roles, with the support of other CLICC members, have been working as Ambassadors and are engaging directly with Senior Managers and elected members. You can see more about what the CLICC Groups have been doing throughout 2022/23 on page xx of the annual report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and development for social workers – young people to help shape the future training offer, including awareness of the wider services and opportunities that young people may need to access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people, as members of the three Children Living in Care Council Groups, have been working with the Tower Hamlets Social Work Academy. They have provided feedback to inform training for professionals and recruitment of new social workers, personal advisors and others who provide support and services our children. Alongside this, we are refreshing our training programme for Personal Advisors using the training offer from charity ‘Become’ to include more of a focus on building relationships and young people’s experience of transitions.

‘Wishlist’ item	Update for 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable travel – improving awareness of, and access to, travel entitlements and increasing the offer through the Pan-London CLICC Participation Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We provide initial Oyster card payments for all young people to get around and financial assistance for those in education and training, as well as for those moving from education to employment until they receive their first salary. We are pursuing work with other local authorities to improve the transport offer for young people through our membership of the Pan London Care Leavers Compact. We are working with other local authorities, and the Department for Transport, to increase accessibility and support for transport for everyone.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Offer for Care Leavers – delivering a more ‘young person friendly’ resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Offer for Care Leavers was refreshed, with input from young people, in early 2022. The Local Offer App called 'Know Now' is providing a valuable resource for keeping our children informed (via their phone) about the wide range of support and services available to them. It provides access to information, advice, helpful organisations, events, and apprenticeship opportunities. The app has been revised in collaboration with our young people to ensure it reflects their wishes and requests.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships with professionals and agencies – establishing ways that young people can easily raise and address any concerns about relationships with staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The professionals that children and young people have contact with, including social workers, personal advisors and Independent Reviewing Officers, have agreed a way of working that puts relationships at the heart of the way they work. This is called the ‘Better Together Framework’ and it was launched in the council in Feb 2023. It demonstrates the way all staff in the Supporting Families Division should work and emphasises the importance of building a good relationship with you and those supporting you, and also helping you to keep relationships with those who are important to you. The council will be checking the difference this is making through regular monitoring. All of our children also have access to independent advice and advocacy which is provided by the organisation Barnardos. We actively promote this service to ensure our children are well-informed about their rights and entitlements within the system.

‘Wishlist’ item	Update for 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral processes – working with young people to identify challenges with referral processes ensuring support is provided and reducing the need to repeat information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social workers, personal advisors and support workers usually attend appointments with the children and young people they are supporting which helps to ensure smoother referral processes. This includes sign ups to tenancies, registration at college and appointments with other organisations such as the Home Office. Young People’s Services (who support the CLICC Groups) also support children and young people to find any support, services or opportunities they might be looking for, and help them to manage referral processes when they are needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health and wellbeing – finding more ways to provide support around emotional wellbeing for young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have an in-house team called the ‘Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Social Care Team’ which is dedicated to working with children who have a social care plan, including children who are in our care. The team provides a dedicated service to children, families and the networks around them. Professionals from the team have been attending CPB through the year and working with us on exploring new ways to respond to feedback from our children. ‘Kooth’ (an online service) is providing free, safe and anonymous mental health support to young people living in Tower Hamlets aged 10 to 25. The service includes material that is specific to experiencing care and has offered to engage directly with our young people. A new programme has also been developed by East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) called the ‘Tower Hamlets Recovery College’. This provision is designed for people who are 18+ who do not reach the threshold for other services. The courses on offer have been co-produced with young people. Both of these services have been promoted to our care experienced young people during the last year and we are continuing to gather their feedback on the offer.

Educational attainment

- The Tower Hamlets Virtual School supports all children in our care and care experienced young people, regardless of which physical school they attend. They are champions, advocates and educators and help to improve education outcomes in a broad range of ways including through co-ordinating educational services.
- A level attainment for our Virtual School students has enabled university entrance for a several of them to study at Kings College London, Royal Holloway University, and the University of East London. The need to support post-16 students has been recognised by the DfE and some funding will be available to support these students in 2023-24
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 was up 3% to 33% achieving national standards in both English & Maths, and at Key Stage 2 there was an increase of 14% to 50% for the same measure.
- Although GCSE results fell in 2022 they were still significantly higher than the national average despite a very challenging prior attainment profile. 22% of virtual school students achieved grade 4+ in English & Maths (with 3 other subjects), compared to the national average of 17%.

Virtual School Awards & enrichment programme

- The achievements of our children in our care were recognised and celebrated at the Virtual School Awards in Feb 2023. These

were hosted by the athlete Kriss Akabusi MBE, who experienced care as a young person.

- The awards recognised the academic achievements of our children but also their engagement in catch-up tuition and our extensive “Give It A Go” enrichment programme. This includes work with the English National Ballet, West Ham Utd, Parkour Generations, Big House Theatre Company and ‘Dead Beat’ film company.

Mockingbird Programme

- The Mockingbird Family Model is a way to bring a group of carers together very much like an extended family. Each group has a main hub carer and with other carers in the group this arrangement allows access to extra support, respite, training and events out together. The model brings benefits to children as they can experience fun activities such as sleepovers and be with a fostering family where there is a shared understanding of experiencing care.
- We constantly receive positive feedback from children, carers and professionals of the impact Mockingbird has had. Many children have been supported to remain with their foster carers, children have built safe and trusting relationships with adults and made many friends within the hubs.
- A third Mockingbird group is being launched in Tower Hamlets in May 2023 and there are plans to create two more additional groups by 2025.

Child focused language and reporting

- Our Independent Reviewing Officer Service is leading on this work which includes recording what comes out of reviews in a letter, written directly to the child in age-appropriate language. This approach is in response to feedback from children and is aimed at being more personal and engaging for our young people.
- This model is being used for other records such as monitoring, case notes and audits. We will work with social work teams and the Learning Academy to implement it as the standard for how all children’s files are written.

Lifelong Links Service

- The Lifelong Links Service connects children and young people in care with family, friends and other significant people - creating support networks for the years to come. Lifelong Links workers find the right people to provide ongoing support and contact. This often involves reconnecting with key people in a child’s life after some years so they can be part of their lives in the future.
- The service has continued to develop during 2022. A planning & implementation group is in place which brings together representatives from children’s social services, parents, fosters carers and others to drive and support further development of the service.

- An example of the Lifelong Links service in action comes from a co-ordinators who described one experience *‘I had the privilege of working with ‘M’, an adopted young person, and their family. I gathered a wealth of information, such as photos and birth family stories. At the end of our work, I presented this information to the young person in a ‘Lifelong Links Journey Book’. They appreciated it so much.’*

Training for Foster Carers

- The focus on continuous professional development for foster carers has produced good outcomes with a strong uptake for courses as well as an increase in the number of carers who have completed the 6-week Foundations for attachment parenting course. Alongside the other course topics, which run frequently throughout the year, this supports the service to be a trauma-informed and a therapeutic fostering service.
- The annual training offer provided more opportunities for flexible learning to ensure we are providing all carers equality of access to high quality learning and development opportunities. We increased the provision for those who work or have other commitments during the day, and for the support network of carers.
- In addition, to add to the variety of support groups currently offered, the Skills Support Group was relaunched in Sep 2022 to help plug knowledge gaps and support carers with English as a second language.

Health and wellbeing

- Work commenced during the year on development of a 'NHS North East London Children Looked After & Care Leavers Strategy.' Engagement has taken place between health colleagues, council officers and children and young people to steer and inform the draft strategy. The input of 'peer nurses' has been sought and more work with young people is planned to ensure that what matters most to them is understood.
- The Just4U Event 2022 was an opportunity to engage directly with children, young people and carers about health and wellbeing. Responding to what we know are priorities in this area we focused on providing information and advice about dental and oral hygiene.
- We held discussion session with children and young people (via the CLICC Groups) to explore some key questions relating to health and wellbeing in March 2023. Health colleagues and council officers shared information in advance and prepared questions based on existing feedback, and performance information, in advance.
- The discussion session with young people (as above) was central to the agenda when Corporate Parenting Board held a thematic meeting on Health & Wellbeing. A presentation

was given by the young people's representatives on the board. Health colleagues attended for the discussion with young people and consideration of what could be done to respond. All of the feedback from this meeting has informed the work of the Health Steering Group (for children in our care). The refreshed priorities and actions for this group include details of the response including work to improve take up and outcomes for health assessments. This will include a health assessments video and guide to be launched in July 2023.

Virtual School - Case Study

J has significant Special Educational Needs and joined a specialist secondary school for pupils with social, emotional and educational needs. The school uses a trauma informed approach and an emphasis on working with each pupil on their individualised targets.

J has had consistent support from the specialist Virtual School Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and consistency in foster care. J's SAT scores were low in English & Maths and their Pupil Education Plan, and Pupil Premium spend, focused on supporting these core skills and nurturing interests and engagement through a variety of activities. They have also been a consistent and valued member of Army and Policy Cadets.

J has had serious incidents at school (related to behaviour) which could have resulted in exclusion. However, his reintegration to school was professionally managed and supported. His school has nurtured his ability in Maths and the Virtual School has funded additional support for this. Although J has experienced many barriers to learning they have attained a 4+ grade in Maths which is a fantastic achievement.

Lifelong Links - Case Study

The thoughts below are from two young people who have been involved in Lifelong Links, sharing their views on the difference the service has made for them.

'M' (Age 14) 'It felt amazing to see everyone. I'm grateful to Lifelong Links as they really helped make it possible to get in touch with people who I thought I would never be able to get back in contact with. I want to go into university one day and study to become a dentist. I've wanted to be a dentist for so long and study about it as it interests me. Having the support of a family and knowing other successful people in the family is so great'.

'A' (Age 17) 'Through Lifelong Links I now see my family frequently. It felt like my voice was heard and my thoughts were relevant. I am so grateful to the coordinator for just being independent and supportive. It has changed my life and empowered me to be confident and able to get support for any other problems I may face. I'm currently in college and I'm hoping to go to university and become a midwife. I'd like to support vulnerable women as I feel that giving birth is empowering'.

Health Assessment – Case Study

Whilst residing in semi-independent living 'P' had a review health assessment. Concerns were highlighted around suitability of the placement, a significant loss of weight, eating difficulties and low mood. 'P' was declining any offers of support in the area and wanted to return to live with family or previous foster carers. Their aspirations were noted as 'to feel secure, have a family, and to have a job'.

The review health assessment was quality assured by the Designated Nurse for 'Looked After Children' and concerns were raised with Children's Social Care. Following a Care Planning Meeting, a new search for a suitable placement for began. After a brief stay with previous foster carers, 'P' decided to go and live with their father - with support from their social worker and other professionals.

Many positive changes have come from the response to 'P's wishes and concerns, including gaining weight, feeling happier and settled, and working on projects with their father. Lifelong Links has been involved and promoted contact with siblings, and arrangements are regularly reviewed through required processes by social care professionals.

Stability & Permanency - Case Study

F was living with the same Foster Carer until the carer separated from their partner and other issues emerged. The relationship between F and the carer deteriorated and eventually the living arrangement broke down. Social care professionals spent time assessing how to minimise further disruption to F's life and find a suitable home.

Social care professionals were aware that F had consistently voiced a wish to return to his parents. F moved to a new living arrangement but ultimately it was not successful. Over time F's parents engaged positively with professionals and made changes in their parenting with the support provided to them. Through joint working between professionals, including Social Workers, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Independent Reviewing Officers a staged transition plan for F to return to their parents was implemented.

The Edge of Care Team, Fostering Team and school all contributed to the transition plan and through collaborative working F's wishes were met and further disruption was minimised.

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

Name	Job Title / Organisation	Name	Job Title / Organisation
Samantha Anderson	Young Carers Engagement Officer, Young People Services, LBTH	Reagender Kang	Designated Nurse for CLA, NHS NEL CCG
Suluk Ahmed	Councillor	Leo Major	Head of Children Looked After and Through Care Services
Musthak Ahmed	Councillor	Nji Oranu	Head of Children's Regulated Services and Resources, Supporting Families Division, LBTH
Susannah Beasley-Murray	Director, Supporting People, LBTH	Geraldine O'Donnell	Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service, LBTH
Bodrul Choudhury	Councillor	Shirley Quarshie-Dunne	Child Protection and Reviewing Service, Children's Social Care, LBTH
Peter Cox	CAMHS in Social Care Team Lead, LBTH	Karen Sanderson	Senior Commissioning Manager, Children and Young People, LBTH
David Cregan	Headteacher Virtual School, LBTH	Ann Sutcliffe	Corporate Director, Place, LBTH
Hasan Faruq	Youth Participation & Engagement Manage, Young People Services, LBTH	Tracy Stanley	Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture, LBTH
Asma Islam	Councillor	Maium Talkudar	Chair of the CPB and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Sirajul Islam	Councillor	James Thomas	Director of Children and Culture, LBTH
Foster Carer Representatives		Young People's Representatives	Children in Care Council

Appendix B – CPB Meetings and Agendas 2022/23

MEETING	KEY AGENDA ITEMS
Standing Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Foster Care Representatives • Update from Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) • Performance Report • Case Study (based of theme of each meeting)
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets Local Offer for Care experienced young people 2022 • Update on Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan 2021/22. • TNW CCGs Safeguarding Annual Report 2020/2021 (Tower Hamlets Children Looked After)
April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop Session on priorities for children we care for & care experienced young people • Report on Tower Hamlets CAMHS in Social Care Team • Draft Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021 • Proposal for development of Corporate Parenting Strategy for Tower Hamlets
July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual School Annual Report • Annual Fostering and Permanence Panel Report • Independent Reviewing Officer's Annual Report • Update on Draft Sufficiency Strategy
October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual School: Interim reporting of outcomes for Children in our Care (including Case Studies) • Feedback from Just4U Event • Fostering Recruitment Strategy 2022/25
February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Placement Stability & Permanency • Adopt London East (ALE) Annual Report • Update on Development of Corporate Parenting Strategy

Appendix C – Children's Social Care Key Tower Hamlets Performance Indicator Report: Extract March 2023 (benchmarking shown where data is available)

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period	National	Regional/ Statistical Neighbours
Looked After Children							
Number of Children Looked After	307	306	335	301	Snapshot		
Children Looked After (CLA) - rate per 10,000	43.3	43.1	45.2	46.8	Snapshot	67	63.3
No. of new Children Looked After (CLA) episodes in period	151	131	186	136	YTD		
No. of Children Looked After (CLA) exits in period	172	131	161	169	YTD		
% repeat Children Looked After (CLA) (entries that were re-entries within 2 years)	6.0%	2.3%	2.7%	2.2%	YTD		
Average no. of placement moves	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6	Rolling Year		
Max. no of placement moves	6.0	5.0	8.0	8.0	Rolling Year		
% Children Looked After (CLA) long term placement stability	71.6%	73.1%	64.8%	54.5%	Snapshot	70%	71.5%
% of Children Looked After (CLA) with a named Social Worker (key worker or personal advisor)	100.0%	100.0%	100%	100%	Snapshot		
% of CLA entries with health assessment done within 20 days	82.0%	91.5%	45.7%	55.5%	YTD		
% of CLA >12 months who had an annual Health check	78.7%	86.0%	97.3%	88.9%	Snapshot	91%	93.9%
% of CLA >12 months who had an annual Dental check	83.1%	60.0%	82.1%	92.8%	Snapshot	40%	34.3%

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period	National	Regional/ Statistical Neighbours
Section 6 - Care experienced young people							
% allocated care experienced young people "in touch" (17,18,19,20,21 yr. olds with activity updated within last year)	95.7%	98.8%	88.9%	98.1%	Snapshot		
% allocated care experienced young people 'in touch' and known to be EET	67.3%	72.6%	64.3%	77.3%	Snapshot		
% allocated care experienced young people 'in touch' and known to be in suitable accommodation	91.4%	95.8%	83.6%	94.4%	Snapshot		
% allocated care experienced young people with a pathway plan	98.8%	98.2%	96.9%	95.0%	Snapshot		

% allocated care experienced young people with pathway plan updated in last 6 months	96.7%	95.6%	87.5%	88.3%	Snapshot		
Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period	National	Regional/ Statistical Neighbours
Missing Children							
Number of missing children during period	276	210	205	237	YTD		
Missing from home	176	141	156	179	YTD		
Children Looked After (out of borough)	73	41	39	48	YTD		
Children Looked After (in borough)	16	15	15	20	YTD		


Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period	National	Regional/ Statistical Neighbours
Fostering and Adoption							
Number of Foster Carer Enquiries (initial contact)	95	193	240	127	YTD		
No. of Foster Carer Enquiries leading to Initial Visits	48	53	44	24	YTD		
% Initial visits completed within 5 working days	75.0%	44%	46%	52%	YTD		
Total Approved Foster Carers (excl. family & friends, staying put, on hold/unavailable)	97	116	113	115	Snapshot		
Foster Carer Vacancy rate	23.7%	45.3%	21.1%	24.7%	Snapshot	19.7%	19.9%
Foster Carer Occupancy rate	75.3%	54.7%	78.9%	75.3%	Snapshot	61.1%	62.9%
No. of children placed with In-house Foster Carers	115	109	116	123	Snapshot		
No. of children in Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) Placements	92	85	72	77	Snapshot		
Children in Residential Placements (incl dual registered schools and mother & baby units)	30	27	22	18	Snapshot		

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period	National	Regional/ Statistical Neighbours
Fostering and Adoption (continued)							
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	376.3	432.3	509.5	572.4	YTD (3 years)		
Average time between court authority to place a child and deciding on a match	164	245	300	369	YTD	175	182
% waiting less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their family (14 months)	46.2%	36.1%	35.7%	41.2%	Snapshot		
Adoptions from care (number adopted and percentage leaving care who are adopted)	6.4%	6.1%	8.7%	7.1%	YTD	13%	7.6%
Number of Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders granted for Looked After Children (S)	37	17	18	17	YTD		
The percentage of black and minority ethnic children leaving care who are adopted	4.4%	3.9%	7.1%	5.4%	YTD		
The percentage of children who ceased to be looked after because of an SGO	15.1%	8.4%	2.5%	3.0%	YTD		17.7%
Percentage of Children Looked After (CLA) placed for adoption within 12 months of agency decision	91%	88%	50%	75%	YTD		

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current – Autumn 2022/23	Period
Virtual School					
% of pupils making expected progress in English and Maths	56%	62%	67%	75%	Termly

% of pupils where a Pupil Education Plans (PEP) meeting took place in the term	93%	95%	96%	98%	Termly
% of Pupil Education Plans (PEPs) which were signed off and RAG rated green	73%	91%	78%	84%	Termly

This page is intentionally left blank

Non-Executive Report of the: Council 19 th July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Questions submitted by Members of the Council	

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

SUMMARY

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

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

11.1 Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussain

Can the Lead Member provide an update on the ongoing costs accrued by the council in redressing the failure to sign off the council accounts under the last administration?

11.2 Question from Councillor Mohammed Chowdhury

We are facing an unprecedented housing crisis in the borough. I have been contacted by many private tenants that their landlord is turning their rented accommodation into Airbnb accommodation for more profit. Some of these private tenants will be homeless soon, which, in turn, enhances the current crisis. Could the lead member for Housing tell us their plan to regulate the increase of Airbnb or similar holiday accommodations in the borough?

11.3 Question from Councillor Shafi Ahmed

Can the Mayor or Lead Member please update on the progress of the LBTH Local Plan refresh, and what he hopes to see achieved in the outcomes of this process?

11.4 Question from Councillor Marc Francis

Can the Mayor and Lead Member explain why they have stopped plans to introduce a raised table zebra crossing on Parnell Road to make it safer for older residents and families with children crossing from Lefevre estate to cross to Roman Road market?

11.5 Question from Councillor Amin Rahman

Can the Lead Member feedback on the recent peer review that looked at our early help service which took place in February and March and the Care Leavers which happened in May?

11.6 Question from Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

With the removal of funding for George Green's school and the cancelling of NCIL projects in the most population-dense area of the UK, what investment is the mayor making on the Isle of Dogs?

11.7 Question from Councillor Bodrul Choudhury

Can the Lead Member update the council on progress with the external independent investigation of our housing management department? Can the Lead Member tell us who has been appointed and set out a timeline for delivery?

11.8 Question from Councillor Asma Islam

How many homeless residents were supported into suitable accommodation for the council year 22-23 and how did that compare against the target set for the year?

11.9 Question from Councillor Ahmodul Kabir

Many residents have complained about the cleanliness of Tower Hamlets' streets. Can the Lead Member or the Mayor provide Council with an update on measures being taken to ensure our residents don't have to walk through dirty streets?

11.10 Question from Councillor Leelu Ahmed

How many affordable homes were delivered by the council for the council year 22-23?

11.11 Question from Councillor Ahmodur Khan

Can the Lead Member explain the number of red and ambers in the Council's Strategic delivery and performance report: Year One Delivery Plan 2022 – 2023, and what measures are being taken to urgently address them?

11.12 Question from Councillor Rachel Blake

How many complaints has the council received about landlords in the private rented sector and how many of these complaints have been investigated by the council?

11.13 Question from Councillor Musthak Ahmed

This Cost-of-Living crisis has seen the poorest and most vulnerable in Tower Hamlets hit hardest. Can the Lead Member tell us what measures have been put in place to support affected residents?

11.14 Question from Councillor Amy Lee

NHS Northeast London have approved cuts of £82 million this year, but have not revealed which services will be affected. What questions have you asked of NHS NEL on this, to ensure that Tower Hamlets residents are not hit by these cuts?

11.15 Question from Councillor Bellal Uddin

Can the Lead Member update the council on progress with implementation of council's new youth service - Young Tower Hamlets?

11.16 Question from Councillor Ayas Miah

How many waste collections have been missed for the council year 22-23 and how does this compare against its target?

11.17 Question from Councillor Harun Main

Could the Mayor or Lead Member provide us with an update on the decision taken to bring all of the Borough's leisure services in-house?

11.18 Question from Councillor Maisha Begum

How many children are receiving EHC assessment decisions within the statutory 6 weeks? How many parents are receiving communication on the outcome within the statutory 16 weeks? How many children are receiving a plan within the statutory 20 weeks?

11.19 Question from Councillor Abdul Mannan

Could the Lead Member update Council on action taken to address the concerns raised by some Somali residents about the lack of support from the housing options service?

11.20 Question from Councillor Sabina Akhtar

How many students have been successful in applying for the EMA/bursary fund and how many applied? How much funding remains in both yearly budgets?

11.21 Question from Councillor Shubo Hussain

How many payments to date have been made from the SME Energy Efficiency Grants programme? Is there a register of successful applicants?

11.22 Question from Councillor Asma Begum

How many meetings have there been of the Mayor's Advisory Board for Climate Change (MABCC) and what is the current membership of the board?

11.23 Question from Councillor Rebekah Sultana

How many meetings of The Mayor's Keep our Borough Moving forum have taken place and who currently sits on the forum/board?

11.24 Question from Councillor Amina Ali

Could the KC advice on the Grant's determination process be published and/or provided to members?

11.25 Question from Councillor James King

How many new cycle parking hangers/racks have been completed by the LBTH this year and what is the completion target for 23-24?

11.26 Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah

Can the Mayor explain why the Council has chosen to retain basketball hoops in Wapping Gardens, despite their commitment to remove these if there was misuse of the MUGA during the trial period, and despite a large amount of evidence from residents that shows there was misuse?

11.27 Question from Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Could we be provided with a progress update on the refurbishment of the mayor's office and the associated costs with the work?

11.28 Question from Councillor Sabina Khan

How many meetings of The Mayor's Keep our Borough Moving forum have taken place and who currently sits on the forum/board?

11.29 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam

Will the Mayor be able to update me on whether the borough will be accepting £1m LIP funding that is being held by TFL? I have received an inquiry on behalf of a resident who requested an upgrade to a bus stop and to have a bench installed – he was informed that funding was restricted and that negotiations were ongoing with the mayor.

11.30 Question from Councillor Peter Golds


Island Gardens ward residents on Manchester Road and Eastferry Road have concerns regarding the damage done to their homes caused by increased commercial and public traffic on the roads. The decision by the Mayor to cancel the feasibility study and traffic measures on these roads in his revisions to the NCIL scheme could potentially cause serious problems to houses in this area. Will the Mayor reconsider this decision and meet with residents to see personally the current situation?

11.31 Question from Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

I along with all other councillors hear countless stories from constituents that they have had confusing or unexplained contact with the housing team and lettings team at the council. For example: paperwork is lost or not filed, viewings are recorded which never actually happened, viewings which happened aren't recorded, letters are reportedly sent but are never received.

Could the administration please outline what work they are doing to improve the Council's housing service?

This page is intentionally left blank

Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 19 th July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motions submitted by Members of the Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. The following motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 11 for debate at the Council meeting.
2. The motions submitted are listed overleaf. In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, the motions alternate between the administration and the other Political Groups.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf is the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 Motion on CELEBRATING MIGRATION

Proposed by: Cllr Musthak Ahmed

Seconded by: Cllr Amina Ali

This Council notes:

- The integral and invaluable role that migrants, refugees, and asylum seeking peoples have played in shaping the history and culture of Tower Hamlets.
- That those fleeing tyranny and oppression – whether they be the Jewish communities fleeing the pogroms of Tsarist Russia; the fascism of Mussolini, Franco and Hitler; the Irish, Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and South East Asian communities escaping the poverty and deprivation of colonialism; or Somali and Ukrainian refugees seeking safety from war – have always been welcomed into this Borough, enriched our community, and thrived.
- That the contribution of these communities to the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of the Borough have changed its identity for the better.
- That these groups have worked with and forged great links of solidarity and friendship with pre-existing working class communities, who themselves have played a proud and positive role in the forging of the borough we live in today.
- That these communities have stood together and fought against racism and hatred in every generation: from those who stood bravely against the fascist Blackshirts in the 1930s; to the Caribbean community that fought against racism in the 50s and 60s; the Bangladeshi and South East Asian community – including the Mayor and many members from across the chamber – who faced down the National Front in the 70s and 80s; and the broad coalition of communities that expelled the EDL in the 2010s.

This Council believes:

- Tower Hamlets should always be a borough where the poor, the tired, the oppressed, and the hungry can come and know they will be welcomed and treated with dignity and respect.
- That our borough's diversity and openness represents the best of humanity, and demonstrates that tolerance, respect, and understanding will always produce caring and cooperative places for people to live.
- That regardless of religion, skin colour, sexual orientation, gender, or belief system, Tower Hamlets will always be a safe place for all its residents.

This Council resolves:

- To produce an exhibition showcasing the rich history of migration to Tower Hamlets, to be showcased in the new Town Hall.
- To build on the borough's work with organisations that support and protect migrants and refugees.

- To work with relevant epistemic communities and external stakeholders to develop and enhance its institutional knowledge in protecting and promoting refugees and asylum seeking peoples, building on the good work of the existing Refugee and Families teams.
- To work with boroughs and authorities across London and the country to protect migrants, refugees, and asylum seeking peoples from hostile environments.
- To officially state its wish to be designated a 'Borough of Sanctuary' – cementing its commitment to inclusivity, tolerance, and dignity for all people.

12.2 Motion regarding PUBLIC BODY PAY GAP

Proposed by: Cllr Maisha Begum

Seconded by: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

Research from across civil society, including the GMB union shows that there is an Ethnicity Pay Gap, between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic worker and non-Black Asian and Minority Ethnic workers who are otherwise equal in educational attainment. This is not only reflected in the pay of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers, but this disparity is also apparent in the promotion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers in the workplace.

This council notes that:

- One in six Bangladeshi residents across England and Wales live in Tower Hamlets. Locally, the Bangladeshi population remains by far the largest in the country in both proportionate (34.6%) and numerical (107,333) terms.
- Other significant ethnic groups include White British (22.9%), White Other (14.6%), Black African (5%), Chinese (3.3%) and Somali or Somalilander (2%)
- GMB Race, the union's self-organised groups in London, sent out a survey to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic London workers to collect information about their Pay, Terms and Conditions. GMB Race's survey results, while disappointing, unsurprisingly show the fact that only half of respondents thought they received equal treatment and access to bonuses, overtime, pension, and other plus payments compared to non-BAME staff.
- The TUC's own research shows that the Ethnicity Pay Gap for minority workers has shown that students who entered the workplace after GCSE are paid 11% less than their white counterparts. Whilst those who attained degrees, the pay gap more than doubled to 23%. The race pay gap impacts the standard of living of those affected and also worsens for people who have aspired and succeeded in further education.
- The Resolution Foundation has shown that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers lose out on £3.2bn a year in wages compared to white workers. It found Pakistani and Bangladeshi male graduates earned an average £2.67 an hour (12%) less, while among female graduates, black women faced the biggest pay penalty, of £1.62 an hour (9%).
- Within Tower Hamlets only 33.1% of the borough's top 5% of earners are BAME.
- The general reporting of the pay gap is poor and recent figures show so far only 3% of employers with over 250 employees are voluntarily reporting their ethnicity pay gap.
- The Government has acknowledged this weakness and that Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting should be mandatory. However, this has not happened.
- The Women's and Equalities Committee's (WESC) report Ethnicity Pay Gap in February 2022 recommended that the Government should introduce mandatory ethnicity pay gap reporting by April 2023. This should be for all organisations that currently report for gender and that legislation should include the requirement for employers to publish a supporting narrative and action plan.

- This call has been echoed by the TUC.

This council believes that:

- All those that live and work within Tower Hamlets should be equally able to flourish in their place of employment. Therefore, there should be no glass ceiling because of the colour of someone's skin. Pay, promotions, career development and progression and bonuses in all sectors should be underpinned by ability and fairness. This is vital in eradicating systemic racism and division in wider society and a cause acutely relevant to the diverse community in this borough.
- With a cost-of-living crisis hitting households hard, the diminishing earnings of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers will disproportionately push many of such workers further into work poverty.
- This disproportionately affects local authorities, like Tower Hamlets, who are proud of their diverse and multicultural communities.
- All public bodies within the borough should be committed to being open and transparent about publishing its data on employees, whilst running fair, open and inclusive promotion strategies within its public sector duties. Such public data is the first step in creating awareness of the ethnicity pay gap with a view to drive change.
- Other employers across all sectors should do the same and that there should be mandatory reporting of the Ethnicity Pay Gap for all employers with 250 or more staff members.

This council resolves to:

Adopt GMB Race's campaign for an Ethnicity Pay Gap, including:

- Agree to annually report on the Ethnicity Pay Gap within its own organisation;
- Endeavour to regularly analyse strengths and weakness based on its own reporting, devising and implementing annual plans to proactively put in place plans to ensure there are no bars to recruitment, training, salary levels or promotion;
- Work with GMB locally and adopt GMB Race campaigns Ethnicity Pay Gap Charter;
- Work with council suppliers, contractors and partners to seek to do the same encouraging best practice through procurement rules as relevant; and
- Call upon the Government to introduce mandatory pay gap reporting

12.3 Motion on TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING

Proposed by: Cllr Marc Francis

Seconded by: Cllr Asma Islam

This Council notes:

- THCH was founded by stock transfers from LBTH and for many years delivered high-quality housing management as well as the regeneration of estates and community development;
- THCH was recently downgraded to a G3 and V3-rating by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) for both governance and financial viability;
- It has become apparent that the RSH might be encouraging THCH to be taken over by another housing association;
- The RSH has a very poor track record in enforcing mergers and doesn't proactively take any account of residents' views.

This Council believes:

- THCH tenants and leaseholders deserve a much better service than they have been getting from their landlord for several years;
- LBTH has an ongoing obligation to residents living on those estates transferred to ensure the promises made by are delivered consistently;
- Enforced mergers of local stock transfer housing associations have sometimes resulted in residents receiving an even worse service from the social landlord they join;
- The views of tenants and leaseholders in the future of their housing association should be paramount in any decision by the Board of THCH and the RSH.

This Council resolves:

- To call on the Mayor to make representations to the Regulator for Social Housing calling for the views of residents of THCH to be formally sought prior to a decision on any merger;
- To call on the Mayor to instruct council officers to urgently undertake a feasibility on the financial and practical implications of requesting a return of THCH stock to LBTH.

12.4 Motion on DEFENDING MIGRANT'S RIGHTS

Proposed by: Cllr Nathalie Bienfait

This council notes:

- That Tower Hamlets has a long and proud history of welcoming and housing migrants from all over the world.
- That Tower Hamlets is a place where many migrants have access to things that remind them of home, for example food, community and religious spaces.
- That there are currently no safe or legal routes to the UK for those who seek asylum here, including those with family members in our communities.
- That the Bill would prevent people who arrive irregularly (and there are no other ways to arrive currently) from accessing the asylum system. Instead, they will be left destitute, without the right to work and in legal limbo indefinitely.
- That people who want to come to this country are vulnerable to people traffickers, face the risk of detention and deportation and this Bill increases all of these risks for individuals.
- That the Bill would also remove vital protections for children, victims of trafficking and pregnant people, representing a shocking rollback of human rights.
- That we defend the rights of migrants and all communities to live side by side in dignity, and we intend to continue to welcome those who make our borough their home.
- That local authorities have been left out of the decision-making process so far, and yet could have a lot to offer the asylum system if the Government were to collaborate effectively with us.

This council believes:

- That we have a duty to defend the human rights of all our residents, fulfil our public sector equality duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people.
- That we have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in our society, and migrants are a particularly vulnerable group.
- That Tower Hamlets, because of its rich history of welcoming those from overseas, is an ideal place to further support migrants and asylum seekers.

This council resolves:

- To commit our authority to safeguarding and protecting all our children, pregnant people and our vulnerable residents.
- To commit to defending the rights of all our communities to and to working with them so that we can all thrive together.
- To raise a "Refugees Welcome" banner outside the Tower Hamlets Town Hall and to meet refugee and migrant communities in our area to discuss what more we can do to make them feel welcome here.
- Safeguard council funding into the third sector for organisations offering advice to refugees, asylum seekers and on immigration in general.
- Provide more advice services in-house: increase the current offering in the Town Hall advising on refugee, asylum claims and migrant issues in the council.

- Provide education programmes for council staff and councillors on asylum law, migrant rights & No Recourse To Public Funds.
- Contact the Home Office to discuss identifying empty buildings in Tower Hamlets and securing funding from the Home Office to renovate them and provide suitable accommodation for asylum seekers as an alternative to the unstable hotel accommodation.
- Appoint a Migrant Champion Councillor to coordinate this action within the council.
- To mandate our Mayor to:
 - To write to ask the Home Secretary to
 - A. Withdraw the Bill
 - B. Commit to resourcing an asylum system that can deliver fair and timely asylum decisions
 - C. End the contracts with providers of temporary, often poor quality and unsuitable accommodation for asylum seekers in hotels and hostels.
 - To write to the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities to open discussions with local authorities about the best ways and resources needed to provide good quality long term accommodation for all those in need, including asylum seekers, within our communities.
 - To call on the British Broadcasting Corporation to ask them to reflect our rejection of this bill in their broadcasting.
- To work with all our communities to develop and publicise proper reporting mechanisms for hate crime and, with all our partners in our community safety, work to ensure that all reports are followed up and action taken.