

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 March 2014 at 7.00 p.m., Room C1, 1st Floor, Town Hall,
Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

Members:

Chair: Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

Vice Chair:

Councillor Rachael Saunders

(Scrutiny Lead, Adults Health & Wellbeing)

Councillor Stephanie Eaton

(Scrutiny Lead, Resources)

Councillor Fozol Miah

Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs

(Scrutiny Lead, Children, Schools & Families)

Councillor Helal Uddin

(Scrutiny Lead, Communities, Localities & Culture)

Councillor Abdal Ullah

(Scrutiny Lead, Development & Renewal)

Councillor David Snowdon

(Scrutiny Lead, Chief Executive's)

Co-opted Members:

Memory Kampiyawo

(Parent Governor Representative)

Nozrul Mustafa

(Parent Governor Representative)

Rev James Olanipekun

(Parent Governor Representative)

Mr Mushfique Uddin

(Muslim Community Representative)

Dr Phillip Rice

(Church of England Diocese Representative)

1 Vacancy

(Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster Representative)

Deputies:

Councillor Tim Archer, Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed, Councillor Harun Miah, Councillor Peter Golds, Councillor Helal Abbas and Councillor Judith Gardiner

The quorum for this body is 3 Members.

Contact for further enquiries:

Angus Taylor, Democratic Services

1st Floor, Town Hall, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent,
London, E14 2BG

Tel: 020 7364 4333

E-mail: angus.taylor@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee>

Scan this code for
electronic agenda:



Public Information

Attendance at meetings.

The public are welcome to attend meetings of the Committee. However seating is limited and offered on a first come first served basis.

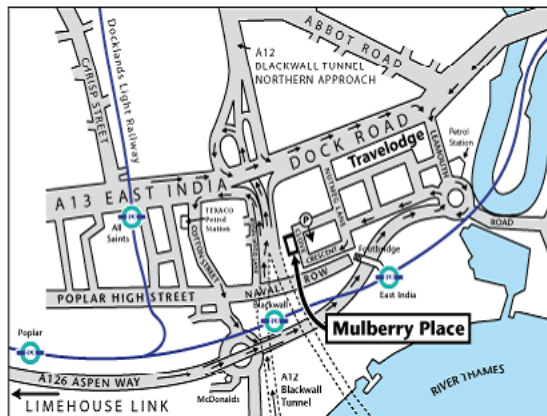
Audio/Visual recording of meetings.

No photography or recording without advanced permission.

Mobile telephones

Please switch your mobile telephone on to silent mode whilst in the meeting.

Access information for the Town Hall, Mulberry Place.



Bus: Routes: 15, 277, 108, D6, D7, D8 all stop near the Town Hall.

Docklands Light Railway: Nearest stations are East India: Head across the bridge and then through complex to the Town Hall, Mulberry Place Blackwall station. Across the bus station then turn right to the back of the Town Hall complex, through the gates and archway to the Town Hall.

Tube: The closest tube stations are Canning Town and Canary Wharf

Car Parking: There is limited visitor pay and display parking at the Town Hall (free from 6pm)

If you are viewing this on line:(http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/content_pages/contact_us.aspx)

Meeting access/special requirements.

The Town Hall is accessible to people with special needs. There are accessible toilets, lifts to venues. Disabled parking bays and an induction loop system for people with hearing difficulties are available. Documents can be made available in large print, Braille or audio version. For further information, contact the Officer shown on the front of the agenda



Fire alarm

If the fire alarm sounds please leave the building immediately by the nearest available fire exit without deviating to collect belongings. Fire wardens will direct you to the exits and to the fire assembly point. If you are unable to use the stairs, a member of staff will direct you to a safe area. The meeting will reconvene if it is safe to do so, otherwise it will stand adjourned.

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 at the Town Hall, Libraries, Idea Centres and One Stop Shops and on the Mod.Gov, iPad and Android apps.



QR code for smart phone users.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST**1 - 4**

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. See attached note from the Interim Monitoring Officer.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**5 - 20**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th February 2014 and 11th February.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

To receive any petitions (to be notified at the meeting).

5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

No decisions of the Mayor in Cabinet (4th February 2014) in respect of unrestricted reports on the agenda were 'called in'.

5.1 SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT

To receive an oral presentation from Mayor Lutfur Rahman.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**6.1 Reference from Council - Executive Mayor's Car - Draft OSC report to Council****21 - 28**

To consider the findings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and refer the arising recommendations to Council.

6.2 Reference from Council - Investigation into Old Poplar Town Hall**29 - 32**

To consider the referral made by Council.

- 6 .3 Tackling the School Places Gap: Pupil Place Planning and the Impact of Academies and Free Schools - Scrutiny Challenge Session** **33 - 56**
- To approve the draft report and the recommendations contained in it and authorise the Service Head for Strategy & Equality to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the scrutiny review group.
- 6 .4 Removing Barriers to Youth Employment - Progress Report of the Scrutiny Working Group** **57 - 104**
- To note the report findings and consider whether further scrutiny into youth employment is required at this time.
- 6 .5 Burial Provision for Tower Hamlets Residents**
- To consider provision for residents in the Borough (refer to tabled document)
- 6 .6 OSC Annual Review 2013-14**
- To consider the draft annual review (refer to supplementary agenda).
- 6 .7 Log of Actions Requested at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings During the Municipal Year 2013-14 (2)** **105 - 126**
- To note the contents of the attached log of actions that have been requested at previous meetings and progress made on actions that remain outstanding.
- 7. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS**
- (Time allocated – 5 minutes each)
- 8. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS**
- To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet.
- (Time allocated – 30 minutes).
- 9. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT**

To consider any other unrestricted business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

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

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

SECTION TWO

**PAGE
NUMBER**

11. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL) CABINET PAPERS

To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet.

(Time allocated 15 minutes).

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

To consider any other exempt/ confidential business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

Next Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 1 April 2014 to be held in Room C1, 1st Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Members' Code of Conduct at Part 5.1 of the Council's Constitution.

Please note that the question of whether a Member has an interest in any matter, and whether or not that interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, is for that Member to decide. Advice is available from officers as listed below but they cannot make the decision for the Member. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending a meeting.

Interests and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

You have an interest in any business of the authority where that business relates to or is likely to affect any of the persons, bodies or matters listed in section 4.1 (a) of the Code of Conduct; and might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself, a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward affected.

You must notify the Interim Monitoring Officer in writing of any such interest, for inclusion in the Register of Members' Interests which is available for public inspection and on the Council's Website.

Once you have recorded an interest in the Register, you are not then required to declare that interest at each meeting where the business is discussed, unless the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).

A DPI is defined in Regulations as a pecuniary interest of any of the descriptions listed at **Appendix A** overleaf. Please note that a Member's DPIs include his/her own relevant interests and also those of his/her spouse or civil partner; or a person with whom the Member is living as husband and wife; or a person with whom the Member is living as if they were civil partners; if the Member is aware that that other person has the interest.

Effect of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on participation at meetings

Where you have a DPI in any business of the Council you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from the authority's Interim Monitoring Officer following consideration by the Dispositions Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee:-

- not seek to improperly influence a decision about that business; and
- not exercise executive functions in relation to that business.

If you are present at a meeting where that business is discussed, you must:-

- Disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, if later; and
- Leave the room (including any public viewing area) for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision

When declaring a DPI, Members should specify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which the interest relates. This procedure is designed to assist the public's understanding of the meeting and to enable a full record to be made in the minutes of the meeting.

Where you have a DPI in any business of the authority which is not included in the Member's register of interests and you attend a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, in addition to disclosing the interest to that meeting, you must also within 28 days notify the Interim Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the Register.

Further advice

For further advice please contact:-

Meic Sullivan-Gould, Interim Monitoring Officer, 0207 364 4801

John Williams, Service Head, Democratic Services, 020 7364 4204

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	<p>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.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>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—</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
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	<p>Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(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.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.01 P.M. ON MONDAY, 20 JANUARY 2014

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

Members Present:

Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman (Chair)
Councillor Rachael Saunders (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor David Snowdon

Co-opted Members Present:

Memory Kampiyawo – (Parent Governor Representative)
Nozrul Mustafa – (Parent Governor Representative)
Rev James Olanipekun – (Parent Governor Representative)
Dr Phillip Rice – (Church of England Diocese Representative)

Guests Present:

Councillor Alibor Choudhury – (Cabinet Member for Resources)

Officers Present:

Kate Bingham – (Service Head, Resources, Education Social Care and Wellbeing)
Chris Holme – (Acting Corporate Director - Resources)
Ann Sutcliffe – (Service Head Strategic Property, Development and Renewal)
Stephen Adams – (Finance and Resources Manager, Communities Localities & Culture)
Agnes Adrien – (Team Leader, Enforcement & Litigation, Legal Services, Chief Executive's)
Andy Bamber – (Service Head Safer Communities, Crime Reduction Services, Communities, Localities and Culture)
Robin Beattie – (Service Head, Strategy & Resources & Olympic Impact, Communities Localities & Culture)
Mark Cairns – (Senior Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer)
Dave Clark – (Acting Service Head Resources, Development and Renewal)
Ekbal Hussain – (Financial Planning Manager, Chief Executive's)

	and Resources)
Frances Jones	– (Service Manager One Tower Hamlets, Corporate Strategy and Equality Service, Chief Executive's)
Paul Leeson	– (Finance Manager, Development & Renewal)
Ruth Ebaretonbofa-Morah	– (Head of Financial Planning & Development)
Graham White	– (Interim Deputy Head of Legal Services)
Matthew Mannion	– (Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mayor Lutfur Rahman
- Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing
- Councillor Amy Whitelock-Gibbs

The Chair **Moved** and it was

Resolved

That the apologies for absence be received and noted

Action by:

Matthew Mannion (Committee Services Manager)

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

No declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest were made.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The Chair **Moved** and it was:-

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 January 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings subject to the following correction being made:

That under Item 3 – Unrestricted Minutes the second bullet point to read:

- He was disappointed that the Mayor had again given his apologies for the meeting and he intended to invite the Mayor to the next ordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4th February 2014.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Reference from Council - Executive Mayor's Car

The Committee considered the report regarding the 'Executive Mayor's Car', discussion of which had been deferred from the meeting held on 7 January 2014 due to the late presentation of requested information. Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, and Chris Holme (Interim Corporate Director, Resources) were present on behalf of the Administration to answer questions from the Committee.

The Chair thanked officers for providing the information set out in the report and stated that this would help the Committee come to a view as to the decision making process that led to the Executive Mayor's Car being acquired.

However, the Chair explained that a key issue the Committee had been asked to investigate related to whether the car was being used appropriately. In particular, the Committee had requested the Mayor's and driver's diary sheets in order to determine the number and nature of the events that the Executive Mayor had attended and to also determine whether these were events that should have been attended by the civic Speaker as set out in Article 5 of the constitution. Members were concerned to ensure a proper separation of the Executive and ceremonial functions of the Council.

Mr Holme and Councillor Choudhury reported that the requested timesheet information was not available at this time.

The Chair and a number of Members of the Committee expressed their frustration that the information was not available and, in particular, that local residents gave up their free time to serve as Co-opted Members of the Committee but they were then unable to fully examine the issues before them. Graham White (Interim Deputy Head of Legal Services) undertook to try and determine what information was available that could be presented to the Committee Members in time for the next meeting at which this issue was discussed.

Members also requested that, should officers not be able to secure the information, that Freedom of Information requests be prepared to request the relevant timesheets.

At the end of the discussion, the Chair explained that, despite that lack of some necessary information, it was nevertheless important that a report be prepared for reference back to Full Council. He stated that he would circulate his suggestions to Members of the Committee and that the reference back to Council would then be formally considered at the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee meeting on 4 March 2014. However, he confirmed that further attempts to secure the additional information must also be made.

Resolved

1. That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be authorised to prepare a draft reference report back to Council on the issues discussed above.

Action by:

Graham White (Interim Deputy Head of Legal Services)

Mark Cairns (Senior Strategy Policy and Support Officer)

5.2 Reference from Council - Watts Grove Depot Project and financial mechanisms for Dame Colet House and Poplar Baths projects - Draft OSC report to Council

The Chair introduced the Committee's draft feedback report to Full Council following the Committee's previous discussions on the Watts Grove Depot and related issues. He highlighted a slight amendment in the first bullet point under 2.0 where the third sentence should read: A partnership with an RP, or another more economically viable alternative model, would have been a better option. He explained that, if the Committee agreed the report, it would be presented to Full Council on Wednesday 22 January 2014.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendation to agree the report.

Resolved:

1. That the report be agreed and submitted to Full Council on 22 January 2014.
2. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends that the Council endorses the findings of the report, and that the Mayor and Cabinet members act accordingly.

Action:

Matthew Mannion (Committee Services Manager – to submit the report to Council)

5.3 General Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-2017

The Committee considered the report titled 'General Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-2017' that had been presented to Cabinet on 8 Cabinet 2014 and had also been initially considered at the OSC meeting on 7 January 2014. Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, and Chris Holme (Interim

Corporate Director, Resources) and officers from all departments were present to answer questions from the Committee.

Chris Holme provided a summary presentation to the Committee, he reported that:

- The savings requirements due to the reduction in the government's revenue support grant were a significant challenge for the Council.
- The grant was being cut by 40% between 2013/14 and 2015/16 and then by a further 20% between 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- In addition to the support grant reduction there were further changes such as a reduction in the New Homes Bonus.
- Most reductions had been correctly anticipated but the Government's Autumn Statement had resulted in an unexpected ending of the crisis and support fund grants of £1.7 million a year (£1.4 million in grants and £300k towards administration costs) and a few other changes which resulted in a net additional loss to the Council of around £1 million per year.
- There would consequently be an updated Budget report presented to February Cabinet where the changes would be set out in more detail but the overall savings assumptions were unaffected.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury concurred with Mr Holme's introduction and also highlighted that the Council had a balanced budget proposed for 2014/15 and so no further savings needed to be identified for that period but that significant new savings would be required after that.

The Chair opened the item up for discussion and the Committee explored a number of issues to which they sought officer responses, including:

- The Council's strategy for using its reserves. *It was explained that the reserves would be used to smooth out the impact of the grant cuts but that the Council was committed to maintaining a minimum reserve of around 5-7% of overall spend as that was considered good practice.*
- On why there had been a significant increase in Third Party Payments and what they were for. *Chris Holme promised to provide a written response but explained that in many cases it would be because of changes to services, for example, the new public health money would be classed as Third Party Payments.*
- Whether funding was being taken from public health budgets for other projects and whether there had consequently been an impact on service provision. *It was explained that there had been no impact on public health service delivery and that the grant was ring fenced at least until 2015/16. However, the Council was looking at administrative efficiencies and new public health initiatives.*
- Whether plans for personalised homecare were still behind schedule and if the Council still directly employed homecare workers. *Officers explained that there had been a reduction in directly employed staff due to voluntary redundancies and that work was ongoing on developing personalised homecare but that there were issues around needing to develop flexible local markets to make savings against*

using large, inflexible organisations. Kate Bingham (Service Head, Resources, ESCW) undertook to provide Members with more details on the current situation.

Members had a detailed discussion on Asset Management, in particular around how asset sales were feeding through to the capital programme, what the funds raised from previous sales were being spent on and whether plans for a new Civic Centre rested on the ability to raise funds from asset sales.

Ann Sutcliffe (Service Head, Corporate Property and Capital Delivery) reported that the Asset Strategy was about to be updated as it had last been reviewed in 2011 and that more details would be available in the next three/four months. In relation to the new Civic Centre she reported that it was necessary to have a civic centre proposal before the lease expired at Mulberry Place. It was expected that moving to a new Civic Centre would prove to be the most cost effective option although a full assessment of the Council's needs was being prepared.

Following further discussion of the Asset Strategy, the Chair requested that officers provide the Committee with a list of assets that the council holds and those that have recently been sold and what the funds were used for.

Next, the Chair introduced a discussion on the Council's Free School Meals programme. In particular the Committee were interested to discover what the cost would be if the scheme was extended to all Primary School children and what the administrative impact of the scheme was. The Committee also sought reassurance that officers were working to ensure that all pupils entitled to Statutory Free School Meals were still being registered correctly to ensure grant funding for other support services was maintained.

Kate Bingham (Service Head, Resources, ESCW), responded that:

- Officers were monitoring the Statutory Free School meals figures to spot inconsistencies and acting accordingly.
- Administrative costs were significant but had so far been absorbed by the Council and officers were undertaking a lot of work with schools to support them as well.

Following the discussion the Chair requested that officers provide more detailed information on the cost of free school meals, both the existing arrangement and also should the scheme be extended to all primary age pupils. The data to be broken down as follows:

- The number of children (years: reception to year 2) currently receiving free school meals (and how many were Statutory recipients)
- The number of pupils (years: 3 and upwards) currently receiving Statutory Free School Meals.
- The additional number of pupils (years 3 and upwards) who would receive the meals if lunches were made free for all primary age children.

- The core cost of providing free school meals at present (total and per child), and the cost of providing free school meals to all primary age children (total and per child).
- The existing administrative cost/impact and the likely increase (if any) in the administrative burden, to the council and schools, should the scheme be extended to all primary school pupils.

The Committee then moved on to discussing the University Grants Programme. Officers reported that the scheme was continuing for a second year in 2014/15 for up to 400 students and that it was a two year funded programme. The Committee heard that no grants had been awarded from year one yet due to the need for students to prove attendance on their courses first. Officers stated that they were on course to award the first grants next week after there had been a slight delay following an extended application period but that they would be paid in accordance with the policy agreed at Cabinet and in line with Pre-election rules.

The Committee discussed the timing of the grant awards and expressed concerns about this, partly due to the approaching run up to the next local elections and partly on how they should be awarded generally. Members expressed views on a number of options for the payment schedules, Councillor Abdal Ullah for example stated he considered the payments should be termly. The Committee finally agreed that paying the awards by 10 February was reasonable but that if there were delays after that then payments should be made at the end of the University year in June/July to avoid the pre-election period. In addition, Kate Bingham promised to provide Members with information on any impact on the university drop-out rate for students and to report on how the grants were awarded (for example, was it a one off grant or paid in instalments).

Following on from the above, officers were asked to ensure that the Pre-Election guidance was properly circulated to all Council staff.

Finally, the Chair drew the Committee's attention to some of the wider concerns that had been expressed over the budget. In particular whether the savings from the previous budget were being met and also that the Council should be looking to identify additional savings now rather than simply running a balanced budget to help prepare in advance for future savings requirements. The Committee agreed and asked to be assured that there was a proper strategy in place to meet these future challenges.

At the end of the debate the Chair thanked Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Chris Holme and all the other officers who had attended the meeting. He stressed how important their attendance was for the Committee to enable it to ask the questions it needed and to therefore properly scrutinise the budget proposals. He **Moved** that the Committee note the budget report and ask officers to provide the information requested above including on capital assets, free school meals and, in addition, to provide comment on the concerns over planning for future savings and the management of reserves.

All the above information was to be presented to Members before the next meeting.

Resolved

1. That the report be noted.
2. That officers be requested to provide the information set out above to Members of the Committee in advance of the next meeting.

Action by:

Chris Holme (Interim Corporate Director, Resources)

Kate Bingham (Service Head, Resources, ESCW)

Ann Sutcliffe (Service Head Corporate Property and Capital Delivery)

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

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 8.11 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.05 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2014

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

Members Present:

Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman (Chair)
Councillor Rachael Saunders (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor David Snowdon

Co-opted Members Present:

Memory Kampiyawo – (Parent Governor Representative)
Nozrul Mustafa – (Parent Governor Representative)
Rev James Olanipekun – (Parent Governor Representative)

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Alibor Choudhury – (Cabinet Member for Resources)

Officers Present:

Ruth Ebaretonbofa-Morah – (Head of Financial Planning & Development)
Emily Fieran-Reed – (Head of Community Safety Partnership,
Domestic Violence & Hate Crime, Community
Safety, Communities Localities and Culture)
Chris Holme – (Acting Corporate Director - Resources)
Ekbal Hussain – (Financial Planning Manager, Chief Executive's
and Resources)
David Galpin – (Service Head, Legal Services, Directorate Law
Probity and Governance)
Frances Jones – (Service Manager One Tower Hamlets, Corporate
Strategy and Equality Service, Chief Executive's)
Antonella Burgio – (Democratic Services)

COUNCILLOR MOTIN UZ-ZAMAN IN THE CHAIR

INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair opened the meeting and asked members to note the revised budgetary papers which were tabled at the meeting. These were:

- Summary of Changes to the Budget Report submitted to February Cabinet

- Proposals for additional Police Officers in each Ward and an additional council tax discount

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness were received on behalf of Councillor Amy Whitelock-Gibbs.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury submitted an apology for absence on behalf of Mayor Rahman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made

3. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT - MAYOR

The Chair noted the Mayor's apology for absence and informed the Committee requested that it be noted that he was disappointed that the Mayor had not attended to fulfil the invitation to share his plans and priorities with Committee in the context of the forthcoming budget.

4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 General Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-2017 and Strategic Plan 2014-15

The Committee considered the report titled 'General Fund Capital and Revenue Budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-2017' that had been presented to Cabinet on 5 February 2014 and also the two amendments proposed at this meeting. Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, Chris Holme (Acting Corporate Director, Resources) and Robin Beattie (Service Head, Strategy & Resource, CLC) answered questions from the Committee.

The Cabinet Member provided a summary presentation to the Committee; he reported that the revisions concerned funds identified for:

- GRO/CLC/01: Community Safety – Extension of PTF1 for 17 months, maintenance of PTF2 at current levels and addition of PTF3 involving provision of 20 additional Police Officers in the borough. He noted that the work of Officers secured under PTF1 and 2 had helped to deliver the Borough's community safety targets over the last three years.
- GRO/RES/01: An additional Council Tax reduction of £25 for residents who currently receive a partial Council Tax discount, including of elderly and disabled residents and those on low incomes.

The Chair invited Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members to discuss the revised proposals.

The Committee explored in depth the proposal GRO/CLC/01 raising the following issues to which The Cabinet Member for Resources and relevant officer gave the following responses:

- Impact on the level of reserves: The Committee noted that these growth bids would require a reduction in reserves to the minimum level set by Council of £20million. They asked the S151 Officer to comment on this. *It was explained that the minimum level of reserves had been set by Council in 2013 when they agreed the Budget – under that Budget, reserves would be reduced to £20million in 2015/16. Under this proposal, reserves would be kept at £20million into 2016/17.*
- Clarification on the additional resources offered by the extension of PTF1 and creation of PTF3: *–It was explained that: 16 Police Officers were provided under PTF1 for the period 2012/13, 19 Officers were provided under PTF2 for the period 2014/15. PTF1 would be extended to end jointly with PTF2 on 30 September 2015. Under PTF3, 20 Officers would be provided for a 3 year period 2014/15-2017/18 under similar principles. Officers obtained under PTF3 would be additional to those deployed at present.*
- The timetable for recruitment of the new PTF3 officers: *The Committee was informed there are outstanding discussions with the Metropolitan Police concerning the timetable for recruitment however a provisional implementation date of October 2014 was being assumed at this point.*
- The distribution of the PTF3 officers in the borough and concerns that these resources should be deployed at the times when crime was most likely to occur: *The Committee was informed that it was expected that there would be one officer per ward and that these officers would be ring-fenced to work just on that ward level through an agreement with the Borough Commander which is currently being negotiated. It was also stated that officers would also contribute to borough-wide initiatives such as Dealer a Day.*
- Members were keen to understand how the increase in numbers of officers funded by the Council through the PTFs related to the number of officers in the borough funded by the Metropolitan Police: *They were informed that information on officer numbers in the borough was not available.*
- The Committee welcomed the proposal for additional officers but asked for an assurance that the officers would be deployed in each ward at times when the community needed their presence. *The Cabinet Member and officers advised the Committee that the Executive was committed to ensuring that PTF3 officers work on local community safety priorities and that OSC would be informed as agreements are put in place about the deployment of these officers.* Members also requested a material assurance that the additional Police resources would not be used to compensate for the reduction in Police numbers by the Mayor of London/Police Authority

- The Committee wished to understand the comparative costs of funding Police sergeants, and THEOs – *It was explained that costs of Police sergeants and THEOs were similar. However THEOs were able to dedicate their activities to Council priorities while Police Officers were required to respond to priorities set at New Scotland Yard and might not always be able to be deployed effectively or consistently for local issues of most importance to residents. Hence many urban local authorities took a mixed approach to the management of ASB supporting the local police in partnership whilst also maintaining a visible civil enforcement capability.*
- On whether SNT ward forums could be involved in the deployment of the additional officers - *Members were informed that high level discussions were presently being undertaken but the Council would consult with SNT Forums on operational matters. A Committee Member noted that the activities of PCSOs were followed by community leaders via social media and this was a valuable resource.*
- A Committee Member noted that the opportunity to direct activities in PTF1 and 2 had been missed and asked for an assurance that this would be done for PTF3 – *the Committee was informed that priorities were agreed strategically across the Council, however policing was intelligence led. Agreements targeting police resource to local priorities formed the basis of both PTF1 and PTF2 agreements with anti-drug activity being a particular focus. It was confirmed that the Council would continue to pursue its local priorities and also undertake robust discussions concerning how the additional resource paid for by the Council would be used. A committee Member noted that policing in the borough not only needed to address criminal activities e.g. drug dealing but also needed to go deeper to help eradicate the underlying cultures that produce criminality. He argued it was necessary therefore to compel the Borough Commander that the MET provide necessary support to the authority.*
- A Committee member referred to an incident where a problem on an estate had not been resolved because of disputes between the Police, THEOS and the Housing Association about responsibility for the tackling the issue and asked how better communication would be ensured between each of the agencies responsible for community safety – *It was explained that a multi agency approach was used for all issues to ensure that each carried out its duties via a plan for coordinated action between the agencies.*
- On the reduction in number of Met. Police in the Borough – *Members were informed that this information was not available since the MET stopped publishing policing numbers at Borough Level in 2011. Members were shocked to learn that no information on the number of officers lost due to recent cuts by the London Mayor could be provided to the Council and noted that this information was important in order to assess whether there were issues with Officer turnover and to determine whether the Council funding was to be used to make up a deficit. The Chair agreed to write to the Borough Commander to*

request further information on the number of police officers on the borough and how this has changed over recent years.

Members then considered the summary of changes to the budget report submitted to February Cabinet and noted the sum identified for the 'development of the New Civic Centre'. The following issues were raised:

- An explanation of the limited costs advised in the report was requested before the forthcoming Budget Council meeting giving as much information as possible.
- Members noted that exempt information made available to Members on this matter did not detail fully the alternative options considered before the selection of the recommended option.
- Additionally they wished to receive clear information on what capital assets were to be disposed to fund the new Civic centre
- *Members were advised that the full budget report to be submitted to Budget Council incorporated an entry within the capital programme for development of a new civic centre, utilising £10m of "prudential borrowing". These were already factored into the medium term financial plan. The amendment proposed a further £1M from General Reserves as additional resources to support this development.*
- *The S151 Officer noted that once full costs of the development have been identified, it would be necessary to agree the amended capital programme and this was a matter for Full Council.*

Members lastly considered the proposed Council Tax Reduction Discount noting that residents in the borough were already able to apply for a discount of up to 100%.

- A Member asked how the reserve being used to fund this reduction would be replenished in the following year. - *It was explained that the reduction, which would apply to those in receipt of partial council tax reduction, would be funded as set out on page 3 of the supplementary agenda paper. The Committee was informed that the monies would be primarily offset through additional savings in 2015/16 and 2016/17. There could be a small cost element as the proposal may require some minor administrative and system changes.*

Following the discussion, the Chair wished the Committee's concerns on some critical matters relating to the proposal for additional Police Officers as advised in the resolution of the response to be conveyed to the Executive Mayor and to Council as part of its budget response in order that these may be included as part of negotiations with the borough Commander and MOPAC. These are listed in the resolution to this minute.

At the end of the debate the Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Resources, Acting Corporate Director, Resources and Service Head, Strategy & Resource, CLC and the other officers that had attended the meeting for their contributions. He **Moved** that the Committee note the budget amendments and asked officers to provide the information requested above.

All the above information was to be presented to Members before the budget Council meeting.

Resolved

1. That the report be noted.
2. That officers be requested to provide the information set out above to Members of the Committee in advance of the Budget Council meeting.
3. That the Chair write to the Borough Commander expressing the Committee's concerns around the control of the deployment of Police Officers purchased by the Council under PTF1,2 and 3 and request the Mayor to do the same
4. That the following comments of the Committee be highlighted and circulated to the Executive Mayor and then on to Full Council as part of the budget setting meeting:
 - *It was important that in making this provision, the Council's funds were not being employed to compensate for the Mayor of London's cuts to the Police service*
 - *The Committee was disappointed that no data was available to enable the reduction in the numbers of Police Officers in the borough to be quantified and were of a view that information would enable to Council to understand if there was a transfer of expense from the GLA*
 - *Since the employment costs of THEOs was not dissimilar to those of Police Officers, the Committee was of a view that Council would be better recommended to purchase additional Police Officers who would be able to operate with full police powers which were not otherwise available to THEOs. This would better fulfil the wishes of residents for community safety throughout the borough as THEO activity was focussed towards ASB, markets and entertainment zones in the Borough.*
 - *It was important that the Police Officers' duty timetables/rotas were planned around times of need to ensure that their leadership was available to the community at times when incidents were more likely to occur.*
5. **ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT**
 - 5.1 Arising from examination of the Corporate Grants Board minutes that were circulated to the Committee, the Chair queried the grounds for the exempt classification of these documents and was advised that the Head of Legal Services would provide a written response at the next committee meeting. Noting that the contents of the documents did not appear to contain sensitive information, the Chair advised that his wish was that where ever possible information should be publicly accessible.
 - 5.2 The Chair reported a comment made by the Mayor at a Cabinet meeting that he had no confidence in Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and wished

it to be recorded that he was disappointed in the Mayor's comments and felt these were inappropriate. He then invited the Committee to give their views on this matter and the following comments were made:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committees were a legal requirement and therefore had a statutory role to fulfil.
- It was noted that, at the instruction of the Mayor, a review of OSC had previously been carried out by an independent body the results of which stated that Overview and Scrutiny Committee performed well, and noted additionally that if any change were necessary it was that a tougher approach could be taken towards Cabinet. A member requested that the comments arising from the review be reported back to Cabinet. The Chair also requested that this review be made available to OSC Members.
- A Member reported that the role that Overview and Scrutiny Committee performed in regard to children at risk was examined as part of an OFSTED review of the Council's Children's Services. This had found that the Committee was performing as required.
- It was noted that Cabinet Member for Children's Services had found the Scrutiny Post-16 Education Review to be useful. Additionally the Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services had sought to engage with her opposite Member in Cabinet but this had not been acknowledged
- The Mayor's failure to attend give an account was a breach of the Constitution
- The Mayor's failure to attend might be perceived that he did not wish to be challenged.
- The Chair noted and expressed his disappointment that whilst the submissions and comments of all Members attending OSC were recorded in the minutes, this was not reciprocated at Cabinet meetings where the Chair regularly spoke to the agenda item(s) reserved for OSC matters. He stated that, in his view, the Mayor had not engaged and therefore OSC had not had opportunity to engage with Mayoral priorities. He noted that, as Chair of OSC, his wish was to engage with the Mayor and for this to be reciprocated so that the work of overview and scrutiny might progress.
- The Chair noted that, the reports of Scrutiny Lead Members would be presented at forthcoming meetings resulting from their investigations and contrasted these with the Mayor's comments that were reported.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

No resolution to exclude press and public was passed

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

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 8.12 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 6.1

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date: 4 th March 2014	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:
Draft Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Committee		Title: Reference from Council – Executive Mayor’s Car – Draft OSC report to Council Wards Affected: All	

1. **SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18 September 2013, Council considered a report on the business case and value for money discerned from the retention of the Mayor’s private car, and resolved to request that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) review the report and the issues involved. OSC agreed, and the report was considered at its meeting on 3rd December. The Committee deferred further consideration pending the provision of additional information, and the item was considered again at the meeting on 20th January 2014. The officer report is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 1.2 From the information provided by officers, the Committee acknowledges that an options appraisal was carried out before the decision to implement the current arrangements. We also note that the costs of these are largely fixed.
- 1.3 However in considering the options appraisal, we noted that it did not include the use of public transport, use of the Mayor’s own car, or walking as options, which we consider an oversight.
- 1.4 Furthermore, as an element of the business case for the Mayor’s car was the number of his engagements and use of his time, the Committee thought it pertinent to examine the nature of those engagements for which the car was used, and the details of the journeys involved. Members were concerned to ensure a proper separation of the Executive and ceremonial functions of the Council, and that civic engagements were not forming a disproportionate part of the car’s use. We therefore requested and received the record sheets of the Mayor’s driver, which recorded only times of journeys and the mileage travelled. We also requested information on the Mayor’s past diary commitments, but this which was not provided.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends that the Council endorses the following findings, and that the Mayor and Cabinet members act accordingly.
- 2.2 The Mayor's non-cooperation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has meant that we have not been able to access the relevant evidence and information on the way the Executive Mayor's car and driver has been used. We are therefore unable to dismiss the concerns which have been raised about these.
- 2.3 In particular:
- driver records provided to the Committee of the actual use of the car did not detail the actual journeys undertaken, but merely the number of miles travelled;
 - we were not provided with information regarding the Mayor's engagements over the relevant period; and
 - the Mayor did not make himself available to discuss his use of the car.
 - For these reasons, the Committee is unable to confirm that the car was not used for personal or political engagements.
 - We also remain unclear that the car was not used to discharge civic duties which should be undertaken by the Speaker.
 - The Committee acknowledges that the Executive Mayor of the council needs access to appropriate transport in order to carry out his duties. Where a car and driver is used, engagements should be recorded, and details of these journeys made available to the Committee if required, rather than simple mileage as is currently the case.
 - Furthermore, a new, thorough and robust options analysis should be carried out to assess all of the possible options for the Mayor's transport needs. This should include the option of sharing a car and driver with the Speaker, as well as the use of public transport.

3. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 3.1 The report recommends that further options analysis, beyond that already carried out as referred to in the report above, is carried out to assess all of the possible options for the Mayor's transport need. It is anticipated this appraisal would be carried by officers of the council, and as such the financial implications will be the opportunity cost of officer time, which will be contained within existing budgets.

4. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 4.1 Under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council, as best value authority, is under a duty to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.2 The chauffeur is a Council employee and the car is contracted under a lease agreement which terminates in October 2014. If the current arrangements are terminated there will be significant redundancy costs and a termination cost of approximately £5,000 for the lease which tapers off as the agreement nears expiry.
- 4.3 There are no other immediate legal implications arising from this report.

5. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Any relevant matters are set out in the previous reports.

6. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 6.1 Any relevant matters are set out in the previous reports.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any relevant matters are set out in the previous reports.

8. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 8.1 Any relevant matters are set out in the previous reports.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Report to Full Council on Executive Mayor’s Car, 18th September 2013

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of “background papers”

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection.

None

N/A

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2013
REPORT IN RELATION TO THE
EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S CAR
REPORT OF THE ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR,
RESOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Full Council, on 26th June 2013, requested that the Council's Section 151 Officer review the business case and public value for money discerned from the retention of the Mayor's private car and provide a report back to the next full Council meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council note the report in relation to the Executive Mayor's car.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 (AS AMENDED) SECTION 100D

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Background paper Name and telephone number of and address where open to inspection

None n/a

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report is presented to Council in response to a series of resolutions tabled at the 26th June 2013 full Council, whereby it was resolved that the Council's S151 Officer be required "to review the business case and public value for money discerned from the retention of the Mayor's private car and report back to the next full Council meeting".

3.2 The decision to provide suitable transport facilities for the Executive Mayor, and separate arrangement for the Chair of the Council was made in 2011 following a detailed options appraisal. That decision was taken after it was deemed existing arrangements were unsuitable to enable the Mayor to carry out his increasing range of meetings in venues around the Borough, and following a decision of full Council in October 2010 that precluded the Executive Mayor from having access to the former Mayoral car and chauffeur.

3.3 The options appraisal incorporated the following considerations;

- Council owned/leased vehicle and employment of a driver
- Car hire and chauffeur on a contract basis as required
- Hire of taxis as required,

It concluded that the two posts of Executive Mayor and Chair of the Council had distinct transport requirements and sharing a single vehicle between the two posts would not be suitable for operational reasons. Given this conclusion and taking account both the options appraisal presented to him, and being mindful of what Council had resolved, the Mayor, in his executive capacity, determined the current transport arrangements. That determination took account of the number of engagements, use of mayor's time, and existing staffing arrangements

3.4 The executive decision was made for the Council to lease a vehicle and retain employment of the existing driver.

4. CONSIDERATION

4.1 The costs of the Executive Mayor's car have been analysed to identify both fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs are deemed to be employee costs, vehicle lease and insurance, with the variable costs fuel. The car was leased in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

4.2 The total cost of the Executive Mayor's car is approximately £42,300 per annum, although this may vary based on usage. Over 90% of the costs are fixed.

- 4.3 Determination of the Mayor's transport arrangements is an executive function and this decision was based on a detailed options appraisal as outlined above.
- 4.4 This review has concluded that the rationale for the original 2011 decision has not changed, and furthermore there would be costs associated with changing the existing arrangements if the Mayor felt that was appropriate.
- 4.5 This review has also identified that these transport arrangements for the Executive Mayor are not unique, and based on information available from elsewhere that annual costs, as outlined in paragraph 4.2 above are deemed comparable.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Council may put in place arrangements to support delivery of the Executive Mayor's functions under Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 and related legislation. The making of such arrangements is an executive function.
- 5.2 The Council is subject to a best value duty under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness".
- 5.3 The present report is provided on a noting basis and offers an opportunity for the council to scrutinise the arrangements in place in relation to the Executive Mayor's car.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 6.1 This report describes the finance review of the costs of the Executive's Mayors car and the financial implications are included the report.

7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no One Tower Hamlets implications arising from the recommendation.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct risk management actions arising from this report.

9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 9.1 There are no specific implications arising from the recommendation.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content of this report has no implications for crime and disorder reduction.

11. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

11.1 The report sets out how the current transport arrangements contribute to the efficient use of time for the Executive Mayor in fulfilling his duties.

Agenda Item 6.2

COMMITTEE: Overview and Scrutiny Committee	DATE: 04 th March 2014	CLASSIFICATION: Unrestricted	REPORT NO:
Report of: Service Head, Democratic Services Originating officer(s) Antonella Burgio, Committee Officer	Title: Reference from Council – Investigation into Old Poplar Town Hall Wards Affected: Poplar		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 22 January 2014, Council considered an emergency motion on the change of use of the Old Poplar Town Hall under delegated powers following its disposal.
- 1.2 After debating the matter, Council resolved to instruct the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, in conjunction with the District Auditor, to undertake an immediate investigation into the marketing and sale of the former Poplar Town Hall and that the investigation should, in view of the seriousness of this situation, produce a report to be considered by O&S on March 4th and the full council at their meeting on March 26th

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Note the referral and consider the scope of the investigation requested.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution entitles the Committee to consider work requests submitted by Council. Should the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decide to accept the request then it can submit a report containing their recommendations back to Council for them to consider at their next meeting. The relevant paragraph of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules is set out below for information.

Para - 9.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall also respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from the Council and if it considers

it appropriate the Mayor or Executive to review particular areas of Council activity. Where they do so, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall report their findings and any recommendations back to the Mayor/Executive and/or Council. The Executive shall consider the matter at one of its next two meetings following receipt of the report. If the matter is relevant to the Council only then will they consider the report at their next meeting.

4. BODY OF REPORT

- 4.1 The referral from Council is attached to this reference report as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are therefore requested to review the reports and to prepare a report back to Council containing their considered views and recommendations on the issues concerned.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 5.1 All relevant financial matters are incorporated in the body of report.

6. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 6.1 All relevant legal matters are incorporated in the body of report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any relevant matters are set out in the report.

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
None	Antonella Burgio X4881

Full Council 22 January 2014

Decision 13.1 Urgent Motion – Investigation into Old Poplar Town Hall

Proposed by Cllr Peter Golds

Seconded by Cllr Tim Archer

This council notes:

- The former Poplar Town Hall on the corner of Poplar High Street and Woodstock Terrace, E14 is an iconic building dating back to the 19th Century. It was the administrative home of Poplar Borough Council 1900-1938, and as such is a listed building.
- That in 2008 the former Poplar Town Hall was put up for disposal and the Cabinet stipulated that “it should be advertised locally to allow local groups to make an offer”
- That subsequently on 12 January 2011 officers were given authority to dispose of the property in the open market.
- That according to answers provided by the council, the property was “openly and widely” marketed by external agents on 9 May 2011; and a wide range of bids was received on 8 July 2011.
- The property was, according to officers, sold to the highest bidder. The transaction was completed on 11 November 2011. The sum paid by the highest bidder was £876,000
- That this price was not much more than the price of a family home nearby, for example on 6 May 2011 a three bedroom semi-detached house close by in Woodstock Terrace was sold for £585,000
- That the former Poplar Town Hall contains offices, a full size council chamber, and even a self contained flat, and is obviously substantially larger than a three bedroom semi detached house.

This council further notes:

- That the owners of the successful bidder and ultimate purchaser, Dreamstar, are well known to the Mayor and members of his administration.
- That planning permission and Listed Building Consent were granted on the 3rd July 2013 for a change of use from office (B1) to hotel (C1) under Officers’ delegated authority.
- That the change of use from office to hotel use will result in an increase in value of the building by several million pounds.

This council believes:

- That it is entirely inappropriate to grant this change of use using delegated power, considering the public interest in the sale of the building and the effect such a change of use would have on local residents.
- That there remain unanswered questions as to the relationship between the current owner/occupier, and the administration.

- That no answer has been given as to whether in the initial marketing documents bidders were informed that the council would entertain a change of use of this type.

This council resolves:

- To instruct the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, in conjunction with the District Auditor, to undertake an immediate investigation into the marketing and sale of the former Poplar Town Hall
- That this investigation should include details of all meetings and correspondence between officers of the council, councillors, the Mayor, bidders, and those responsible for publicising the sale; and that these details should be published.
- The investigation should pay particular attention to any potential conflicts of interest, etc not properly disclosed.
- That the investigation should appoint an independent property valuer to establish the 2011 valuation of the building with B1 office use and C1 Hotel use, and the 2014 valuation of the building with C1 Hotel use.
- That the investigation should, in view of the seriousness of this situation, produce a report to be considered by O&S on March 4th and the full council at their meeting on March 26th.

Agenda Item 6.3

Committee: Overview & Scrutiny	Date: 4 th March 2014	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:
Report of: Service Head Corporate Strategy & Equality, Louise Russell Originating officer(s) Vicky Allen, Strategy, Policy & Performance Office, Strategy & Equality		Title: Tackling the School Places Gap: Pupil Place Planning and the Impact of Academies and Free Schools – Scrutiny Challenge Session Wards Affected: ALL	

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report submits the report and recommendations of the Tackling the school places gap: pupil place planning and the impact of academies and free schools scrutiny challenge session for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Agree the draft report and the recommendations contained in it.
- 2.2 Authorise the Service Head for Strategy & Equality to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the scrutiny review group.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The challenge session took place on 26th November 2013. Overview and Scrutiny identified the shortage of school places as a key challenge facing the borough where members are concerned to ensure the council is doing everything it can to increase the supply in line with demand. The aim of the challenge session therefore, was to investigate whether the council's pupil place planning arrangements are effective and what more can be done to meet the school places gap.
- 3.2 The objectives of the challenge session were to answer the following questions:
- What measures has the local authority put in place to plan for school places?

- How is national policy impacting on the options open to the local authority?
- How do we work with schools which are their own admissions authorities to improve accessibility of school places?
- What more can the council do to ensure the pupil place planning arrangements are effective to meet the gap of school places?

3.3 The report with recommendations is attached at Appendix One. Five recommendations have been made:

- **Recommendation 1:** Continue to identify options for expansion of existing schools, whilst retaining existing standards about quality and space;
- **Recommendation 2:** Prioritise the continuation of procuring and developing sites in the borough for schools, the delivery of which can be supported by S106 or (in future) the Community Infrastructure Levy, amongst other funding mechanisms. Explore options for retaining site allocations for community schools maintained by the local authority, as far as possible;
- **Recommendation 3:** Review the provision of information to parents about the schools admissions process and allocation of places, to ensure it is flexible, user-friendly and understandable; and
- **Recommendation 4:** Provide more information and in a timelier fashion to Members about pupil places and admissions criteria to support them in dealing with residents' queries, especially on the day school places are announced.

3.4 Once agreed, the Working Groups report will be submitted to Cabinet for a response to the recommendations.

4. **BODY OF REPORT**

4.1 Please refer to appendix One for the content of the report.

5. **COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

5.1 Meeting the Authority's statutory duty with regard to providing sufficient school places will require significant additional resources. Cost of a form of entry (fe) for primary will range from £4.5m - £5m (the latest report to Cabinet in September 2013 suggested that an additional 20 primary fe would be needed over the next ten years) and a secondary fe will range from £3.5m to £4m (with an expected 30 fe required over the next ten years). This pointed to a ball-park range of £195m - £220m to fund the additional capital costs over the next ten years.

- 5.2 Capital funding from the Department for Education will assist, as will the creation of additional places through the establishment of free schools. Nonetheless, DfE capital does not necessarily cover London costs, nor does it cover site acquisition costs.
- 5.3 The recommendations in the report have no direct financial implications, but will assist in the strategy for resourcing the required additional places, each of which will have different circumstances and costs.
- 5.4 The revenue consequences of additional pupils will in most cases be met from additional Dedicated Schools Budget , which varies according to pupil numbers. At present there are General Fund costs in the region of £1m associated with transporting (or providing travel support) for individual pupils where school places are not nearby. Changes to the admissions arrangements will ease that pressure, as will any efforts to provide additional school places.

6. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 6.1 The Council is required by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants and may make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions. It is consistent with the Constitution and the statutory framework for the Executive to provide a response.
- 6.2 The Committee is recommended to agree the draft report which sets out the steps taken by the local authority to deal with the gap in school places, pupil place planning and the impact of academies and free schools in the Borough in view of the increased demand for school places as a result of the growing population of children of school age and changes to the arrangements for the establishment of new schools and the presumption that where a need exists, a new school will be either an Academy or a free school.
- 6.3 Section 14 Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local authorities to secure sufficient primary and secondary schools in their area. Schools will be regarded as sufficient if they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education. Appropriate education means education which offers such variety of instruction and training in view of pupils' different ages, abilities and aptitudes and the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their different needs.

- 6.4 Section 14 (3A) added by section 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides for local authorities to secure diversity of provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice. Local Authorities must consider and respond appropriately to parental representations about school provision in relation to their functions under section 14 of the Education Act. The local authority should give reasonable consideration to parental representations regarding the provision of schools in their area including outlining any proposed action to meet concerns raised about such provision. Under the Information as to Provision of Education (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended) a Local Authority must complete an annual surplus places survey.
- 6.5 In addition, the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, as amended places a duty on the local authority to provide advice and assistance to parents when deciding on a school place and allow parents to express a preference. For each school year the local authority must publish prescribed information about the admission arrangements for each of the maintained schools in its area. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, as amended, places a statutory duty on the local authority to provide full time education from the sixth day of exclusion for permanently excluded pupils and for pupils who are excluded from a pupil referral unit for a period of more than 5 days. The local authority must make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise for each child of compulsory school age who, for reasons of illness, exclusion or otherwise, would not receive it unless such arrangements were made.

7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Tower Hamlets is the fastest growing local authority in the country so ensure there are enough school places remains a key challenge. With approximately 263,000 residents, the borough's population has increased by around 25% over the last 10 years. The borough also has a higher than average young population, and growth in demand for school place is anticipated to grow at a faster rate than was previously projected. Current projections suggest that demand for reception places will increase by 23% over the next 10 years and by 44% for secondary school places.
- 7.2 Whilst councils retain the duty to ensure that all pupils living within the local authority are guaranteed a school place, their ability to influence the number of suitable school places available has become more restricted due to Government legislation.
- 7.3 A key objective of the challenge session is to explore how the council engages own-admissions schools in order to ensure it can meet this statutory duty. Members were pleased to hear about the work the service does with Free Schools and Academies to get them to support some key joint principles for educating pupils in the borough, with the majority of Free Schools and

Academies following the council’s admissions policy. This has ensured that the admission arrangements are fair and accessible as well as serving the needs of local residents.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report or recommendations.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from the report or recommendations.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct crime and disorder reduction implications arising from the report or recommendations.

10. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

10.1 Reports concerned with proposed expenditure, reviewing or changing service delivery or the use of resources must incorporate an Efficiency Statement. Please refer to the relevant section of the report writing guide.

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
none	N/A

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Tackling the school places gap: Pupil place planning and the impact of academies and free schools

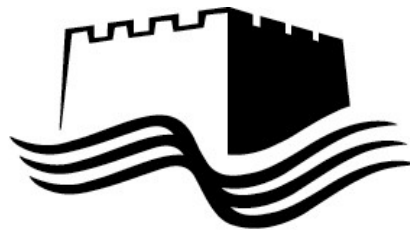
This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX ONE

SUMMARY REPORT

Tackling the school places gap: Pupil place planning and the impact of academies and free schools

Scrutiny Challenge Session Report



TOWER HAMLETS

**London Borough of Tower Hamlets
November 2013**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tower Hamlets is the fastest growing local authority in the country so ensuring there are enough school places remains a key challenge. With approximately 263,000 residents, the borough's population has increased by around 25% over the last 10 years. The borough also has a higher than average young population and growth in demand for school places is anticipated to grow at a faster rate than was previously projected. Current projections suggest that demand for reception places will increase by 23% over the next 10 years and by 44% for secondary school places.
- 1.2 The aim of the challenge session was to investigate whether the council's pupil place planning arrangements are effective and what more can be done to meet the school places gap. The need for the session arose in light of parents' concerns about the growing problem.
- 1.3 The objectives of the challenge session were therefore to answer the following questions:
- What measures has the local authority put in place to plan for school places?
 - How is national policy impacting on the options open to the local authority?
 - How do we work with schools which are their own admissions authorities to improve accessibility of school places?
 - What more can the council do to ensure the pupil place planning arrangements are effective to meet the gap in school places?
- 1.4 The session was facilitated by Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs, Scrutiny Lead for Children, Schools and Families. It took place on Tuesday 26th November 2013.
- 1.5 The session was attended by:
- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs | Scrutiny lead for Education |
| Cllr Josh Peck | Councillor |
| Cllr Carlo Gibbs | Councillor |
| Cllr Lesley Pavitt | Councillor |
| Memory Kampiyawo | Parent Co-optee |
| Nozrul Mustafa | Parent Co-optee |
| Clive Grimshaw | Head of Children's Services, London Councils |
| James Hodgson | LB Barking & Dagenham, BSF Project Director |
| Anne Canning | Service Head Learning and Achievement |
| Pat Watson | Head of Building Development |
| Terry Bryan | Head of Pupil Admissions and Exclusions |
| Frances Jones | One Tower Hamlets Service Manager |
| Vicky Allen | Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer, Corporate Strategy & Equality |

2. BACKGROUND

School types in England

- 2.1 There has been a drive by the Coalition Government towards the establishment of Free Schools and Academies, which are independent of local authority control, and a reduction of schools maintained by the local authority. This creates a tension, as whilst councils retain responsibility for ensuring that all school aged children have access to an appropriate school place, it has become more difficult to influence the location and type of school within their jurisdiction. The urgent need for additional school places leaves the local authority with the option of expanding the size of existing schools or relying on providers to operate a school which responds to the needs of the residents in its locality.
- 2.2 There are several types of publicly-funded schools in England with the majority of pupils attending either a maintained school or an academy. Maintained schools are maintained and funded by the local authority; they follow the national curriculum, national pay and conditions, and are overseen by the local authority. Maintained schools include:
- Community schools – responsibility of the local authority
 - Foundation Trust schools – responsibility of their trust and governing body
 - Voluntary Aided schools – mainly faith schools and supported by a trust
 - Voluntary Controlled schools – as above but responsibility of the local authority
- 2.3 Academies, Free Schools and Academy converters all have the same status in law, they are all 'academies' which means that they are all funded directly by the Department for Education (DfE) and are independent of local authority control. They are funded and held accountable through a legally binding funding agreement with the DfE. School land and property is transferred to Academy converters on a long lease at nil cost. Free Schools and Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum although teaching must be 'broad and balanced' and teach a range of subjects including English, maths and science.
- 2.4 The Government has both encouraged existing schools to convert to Academy status and interested parties to establish new Free Schools. They sell the benefit of the Free School and Academy route as a way of enabling schools to have greater autonomy over their curriculum, budget and staff in order to raise standards of education.

Legislation

- 2.5 The Education Act 2011 made changes to the arrangements for the establishment of new schools by introducing a presumption that when local authorities identify the need for a new school it will be established as an Academy (or free school).
- 2.6 The Act also made changes to the legislation relating to school land, to increase the Secretary of State's ability to make land available for free schools. There is no longer a requirement for Academies to have a specialism, and there have been changes to the requirements around consultation on the set up of an Academy. In addition, the DfE have recently published revised accommodation standards which reduce the standard areas for a school from the current requirements.
- 2.7 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for children of school age. These include the academic standards of maintained schools, the coordination of admissions arrangements, the education of permanently excluded pupils, and paying for additional support needed for individual statemented pupils with high needs.
- 2.8 As of 1st November 2013, 3,444¹ academies have been established in England, 382 of which are in London. 93 new free schools opened in England in September 2013. With London having around 2,200 schools, this equates to over 17% of all London schools in comparison to 15% in England as a whole. There are 78² academy conversions in the pipeline in London with 47 of those approved to open and 31 awaiting approval.
- 2.9 London Councils³ predicts that around 101,000 additional primary school places and 16,800 additional secondary school places will be required in London by 2016/17. As most new schools will be established as Academies and Free Schools, it is inevitable that the proportion of children attending a maintained school will decrease substantially.

¹<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies/b00208569/open-academies>

²<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies/b00208569/open-academies>

³ London Councils delivering school capacity, November 2013

Local context:

Population and projections

2.10 The census 2011 shows that 8% of the borough's population are aged under 5 years old, compared to the London average of 7% and England average of 6%. Information relating to the projected need for additional primary and secondary school places is in section 3.5-3.7 below.

Council's stance on academies and free schools

2.11 The Mayor and Full Council have pledged to oppose the development of academies and free schools. There has been a long-standing commitment by the council to protecting the family of community schools, given the diverse needs in Tower Hamlets, to ensure every child has equal access to good quality education and prevent a two-tier system developing.

2.12 A range of reasons why the Cabinet opposes academy and free schools include the following:

- A network of local authority schools supported by the local authority is the best way to ensure that all our schools and young people get the support and resources they require to achieve the best level of education;
- The reduced level of funding for the local authority limits its ability to work with schools to improve practice, support schools that are failing, and maintain the fabric of schools to a decent standard;
- Support services will need to be procured either from the local authority or arranged independently by individual schools;
- Reduced local democratic accountability to parents;
- Pupils excluded by academies will impact on neighbouring maintained schools that the local authority will have to place them in;
- Difficulty for the local authority to plan for future pupil places;
- Schools with their own admissions' policies may mean pupils have less access to a school of their choice and if they do not sign up to the 'fair access protocol' this could mean reduced community cohesion;
- Transferring land and assets to academies will make it more difficult for the council to co-locate services

Academies and Free Schools in Tower Hamlets

2.13 Tower Hamlets currently has 8 Free Schools and Academies, five of these are primary schools, two are secondary schools and one provides education to 14-19 year olds. There are further schools in the pipeline subject to finding sites or receiving DfE approval.

Current Academies and Free Schools

Age range	Name	Type	Date operational
Primary	Canary Wharf College 1	Free School	Sept 2011
Primary	Constable Education Trust (CET) primary school Tower Hamlets	Free school	Sept 2012
Primary	Culloden	Academy converter	Conversion in September 2013
Primary	Old Ford	Academy converter	Conversion in September 2013
Primary	Sir William Burrough	Academy converter	Conversion in December 2011
Secondary (11-19)	Bethnal Green Academy	Academy converter	Conversion in January 2012
Secondary (11-18)	Wapping High School	Free school	Sept 2012
14-19	City Gateway	Free School	Sept 2012

Approved by the DfE to open

Age range	Name	Type	Date operational
16-19	East London Academy of Music	Free school	Sept 2014
Primary	Canary Wharf College 2	Free school	Sept 2014
Secondary (11-16)	London Enterprise Academy	Free school	Sept 2014

Known proposed Free School applications to the DfE (but not yet approved)

Age range	Name	Type	Date operational
4-18	Canary Wharf College 3	Free school	Not yet determined
Primary	Constable Education Trust (CET) 2	Free school	Not yet determined
5-16	Tower Science Academy	Free school	Not yet determined
14-19	The Aldridge Centre for Entrepreneurship	Free school	Not yet determined

3. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Insufficient capital funding for school places

- 3.1 Members heard from Clive Grimshaw, the head of children's services at London Councils, about the Government's allocation of capital grants for funding new school places. He advised there is a significant mismatch between the funding the Government provides for school places – which has remained fixed – and the demand for school places, which has been rising. This has left a substantial gap in the funding settlement.
- 3.2 London Councils also reported that there is an issue with the methodology used to calculate the capacity required. The Government uses an average cost of £11,000 per new pupil place and bases capital funding allocations on this. However, conditions are different in London, compared to the rest of England, and especially difficult in a growth area such as Tower Hamlets. London-specific factors include rapid population growth, operating at a high capacity within school historically, most of the straightforward options for expansion of capacity having been delivered already and local cost drivers. London Councils estimate that an average cost per place of £20,000 would be more appropriate in London.
- 3.3 Members were very concerned that the average rate disproportionately disadvantaged Tower Hamlets and London as a whole. London Councils are currently lobbying Government on behalf of London local authorities about the problems with the funding methodology and the challenge local authorities face given their lack of control over new schools. There has been constructive dialogue with the Department for Education about the need to address the mismatch in the funding methodology for London, and the overall tension between local authorities' duties and lack of direct control, but further lobbying by London Councils is needed.

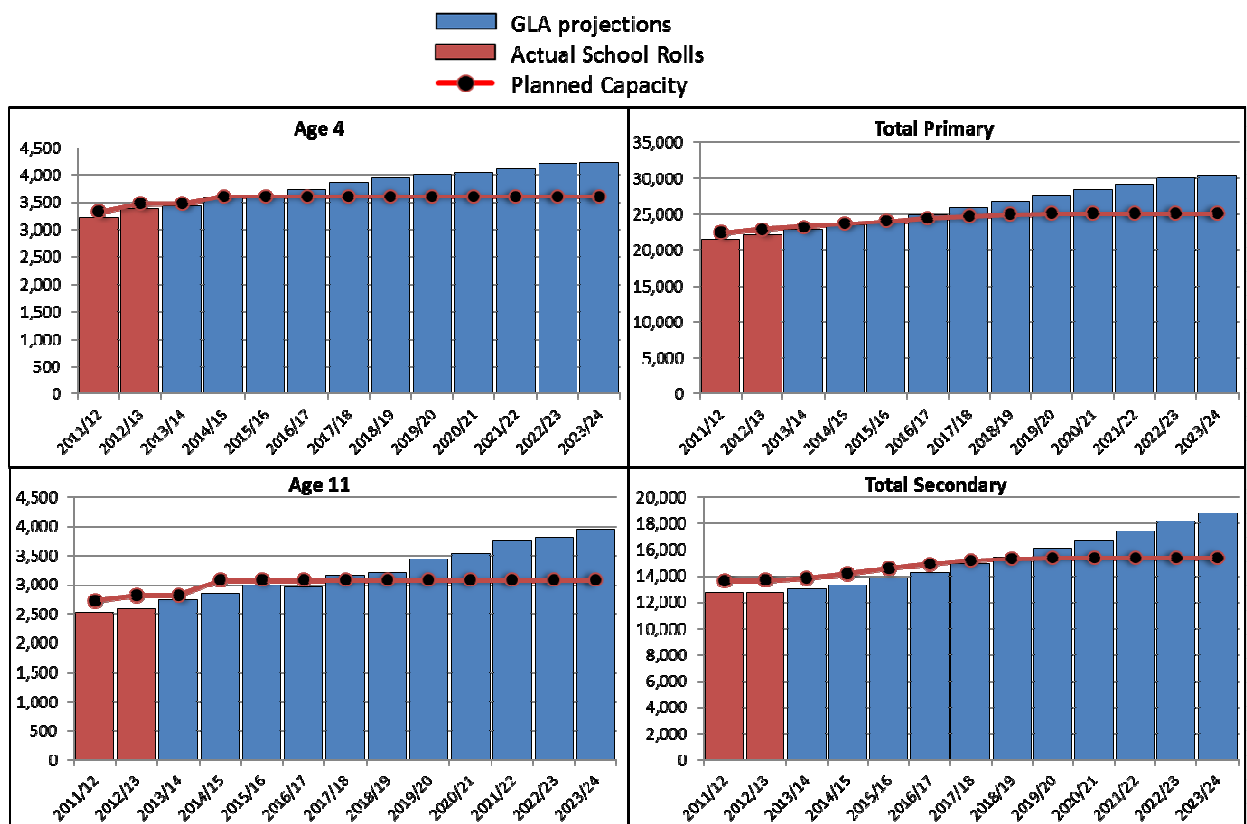
Rising school place capacity need

- 3.4 London Councils also reported that the population growth of young people in London is growing faster than any other region in England. Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, the birth rate in London rose by around 27%. In the same period, there has been a rise in the number of young people aged 0-19 of around 12% in London compared to 3% in England as a whole. By 2016/17 it is projected that the number of additional primary school places needed in London will be approximately 101,000 and 17,000 for secondary. This means 42% of the additional primary school places required for the whole of England will be needed in the London, and 52% of all secondary school capacity needed.
- 3.5 Members heard that this significant demand for school places in London was partly due to London being an employment hub for young people who then go on to have families. Added pressure comes from the fact that while traditionally families have moved out to the suburbs, this is not as simple an option now because of rising housing costs. London

Councils also reported that there is some evidence that families come to London because education is often perceived as of a higher standard.

3.6 For Tower Hamlets, Members were advised that the rising need for school places was due both to the impact of new housing developments in the borough and the birth rate⁴ which is higher than the inner-London average. The births figure for 2011 was 25% higher than the number of births in 2001 (an additional 911 births). This trend is projected to continue, meaning increasing pressure on school places into the future. Officers confirmed that meeting the need for school places is one of the biggest risks facing the Education, Social Care & Wellbeing Directorate.

GLA School roll projections for Tower Hamlets



3.7 Members analysed the graphs above which show that by 2016/17, there will be more primary aged pupils, and by 2017/18 more secondary aged pupils, than there are currently school places within the borough. 800 additional primary school places and 1,200 additional secondary school places are needed in the next 10 years. A total of 6 extra forms of entry for primary places are required on top of those already planned by 2016/17, rising to a further 9 extra forms of entry by 2022. For secondary schools, there is projected to be a need for a further 4 extra forms of entry by 2015/16 rising to 27 extra forms of entry by 2022.

⁴ ONS Births by area of usual residence of mother 2012, released September 2013.

Meeting the need

- 3.8 Members asked what measures are taken to meet the need for additional school places. Members were concerned about provision of school places in three main respects:
- Provision of a sufficient number of places
 - Ensuring places are in the right place geographically
 - Giving families appropriate choice of different types of places
- Members asked officers to outline how the council's pupil place planning meets these three pressures to ensure both need and choice are met.
- 3.9 Officers confirmed that two main principles underpin their approach for managing the demand for school places: guaranteeing equitable admissions and good quality schools. These drivers mean some options for meeting the need – for example, further expansion of already large schools – are rejected, as they would compromise quality.

Identifying the gaps

- 3.10 The maps below shows where the existing schools are located in the borough, compared to where the greatest need is for school places. The darker the shading the higher the percentage of population increase in the area, and therefore need for school places. The diagram shows that there is greater need for school places in the Isle of Dogs and to the East of the borough than in the West. The rapid and extensive expansion in the East of the borough and on the Isle of Dogs has resulted in insufficient school places for families in these areas and means they often have to travel further for to access a school. The map also identifies which schools have potential for expansion, which have already been expanded and which have no site capacity for expansion.
- 3.11 Clear conclusions are that there is limited further scope for expansion on existing sites, in order to meet the rising demand for school places – though there are still a limited number of schools with potential site capacity, which should be pursued. Members also noted the geographical gaps in terms of where current schools are and where new developments are in progress or planned.

Percentage Increase in the Number of Children 2012/13 - 2022/23

Reception Age Pupils

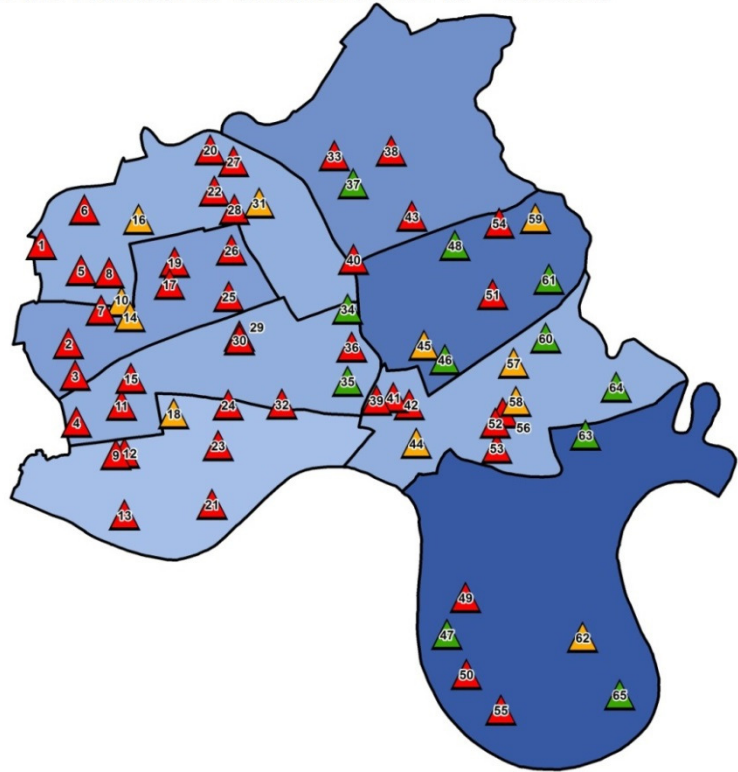
Source: GLA School Roll Projections 2013

Legend

- ▲ Expansion implemented / in progress
- ▲ Potential site capacity
- ▲ No site capacity

Percentage Increase 2012/13 to 2022/23

- 4.4% - 10%
- 10.1% - 20%
- 20.1% - 30%
- 30.1% - 40%
- 40.1% - 50%
- 50.1% - 60%
- 60.1% - 70%
- 70.1% - 80%



© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey, London Borough of Tower Hamlets 100019288.

Percentage Increase in the Number of Children 2012 - 2022

Children Aged 11

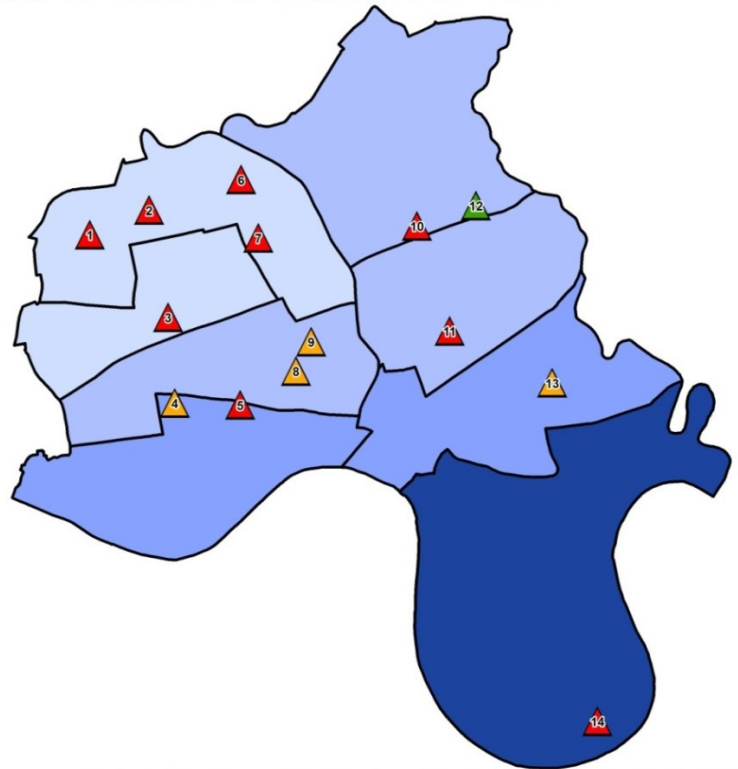
Source: GLA Population Projections 2012

Legend

- ▲ Expansion implemented / in progress
- ▲ Potential site capacity
- ▲ No site capacity

Percentage Increase 2012 to 2022

- 0% - 10%
- 10.1% - 20%
- 20.1% - 30%
- 30.1% - 40%
- 40.1% - 50%
- 50.1% - 60%
- 60.1% - 70%
- 70.1% - 80%
- 80.1% - 90%



© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey, London Borough of Tower Hamlets 100019288.

- 3.12 Additional pressures come from changes to the school leaving age. Members heard how the Pupil Place Planning group have started to look at finding additional school places to accommodate an increased need due to the 'Raising the Participation Age' agenda – which requires all young people up to the age of 18 to be either in education, training or employment. They also welcomed the work the group has planned on reviewing provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) to ensure that there are proportionate additional places for pupils with SEN who require places in special schools.
- 13.3 Officers reported that the council also cannot control the arrival of new free schools in the borough or of new housing developments (subject to planning approvals), both of which impact on pressures around where and how many places are needed.

The right numbers of places – Expanding existing schools

- 3.13 Members heard that given the council's position on free schools and academies, the main option available is to expand schools – either providing more forms in each year, or expanding the school into new age ranges. Officers reported that the more straightforward options for expanding primary schools within their existing sites had generally been implemented. Officers stated that further options are likely to be more difficult or costly to achieve. A number of primary schools have already been expanded and this has provided 9.5 extra forms of entry up to September 2013. In addition, a further 7 extra forms of entry are being provided in September 2014: 3 for primary and four for secondary.
- 3.14 For primary schools, options for further potential capacity have been identified and are being explored. For secondary schools, expansion has been implemented or is in progress in one school, there is potential site capacity which is being explored at 4 schools and for the remaining 9 schools, there is no site capacity.
- 3.15 Officers explained that tackling the school places gap may mean investigating options that would not normally be considered including:
- mixed use development with housing above school accommodation;
 - reducing the standard for external recreation areas, particularly where there is a public open space adjacent to the school which could be used by pupils;
 - the use of non-traditional buildings such as former office or retail premises;
 - whether schools and other services could be co-located.
- 3.16 The Service Head for Learning and Achievement spoke about the innovative plans that are in place to provide additional capacity for St. Paul's Way School, by expanding to accommodate a wider age range of pupils. The new building will include residential properties above the school.

3.17 Members and Officers alike agreed that consideration to expand a school could not be taken lightly, especially if there was a chance that educational standards may be affected. In addition, they did not want the council to reduce the high specifications already adhered to for school buildings and play grounds. They considered these standards essential for young people whose own living conditions may be overcrowded and lacking access to outdoor space.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Continue to identify options for expansion of existing schools, whilst retaining existing standards about quality and space.

Schools in the right place – Identifying and predicting potential sites

3.18 Members asked whether the council was doing enough to predict potential sites for Free Schools and Academies that may be secured by the DfE for new schools, as this could help proactively manage the council's pupil place planning duty. Officers reported that knowledge is shared through the Pupil Place Planning Group but it is becoming increasingly more challenging as standards relating to school buildings have been reduced and the DfE is allowing schools to consider sites which the local authority would not have identified or agreed as being acceptable in terms of space, location, size etc.

3.19 Members heard that as a response to the need for more school places, the council now places high priority on the procurement of sites for schools, as it does for affordable homes through the planning application process. Long term planning has achieved several site allocations for new schools. The site allocations would potentially provide for two secondary schools and four primary schools at London Dock, Westferry Printworks, Fish Island, Neptune Wharf, Bow Common and Leven Road Gas Works. Members were advised that the council will develop these sites which may then be operated by a Free School or Academy provider. However the council will not be in a position to control the timing of potential implementation, which will be driven by the site owners coming forward with planning applications.

3.20 Members were concerned to hear that the council may not be aware of a Free School or Academy's intention to set up in the borough until the DfE approves the application. Moreover, there is significant uncertainty about whether the school will go ahead and be developed at all, or be subject to site changes and shifting timescales. This all makes planning for pupil places more challenging and the council invests significant time in responding to the implications of new schools: waiting to hear if they are approved or have a site; managing the pressure on the admissions process; and trying to bring them under the council's admissions criteria.

3.21 Members were also worried that Free Schools and Academies opening without sufficient regard for location could lead to maintained community

schools becoming less viable because of the proximity of the new schools. Pupils may be drawn away from these maintained schools causing a strain on the school's funding. There was also a discussion about the pressure on the schools' admissions process, as the council offers school places to pupils who then may be drawn to a new Free School or Academy. Conversely, if Free Schools and Academies fail, this puts pressure on the admissions system as the council will have to belatedly find places for the pupils affected. Both scenarios destabilise the admissions process in the short-term, as well as impacting on the council's ability to plan for the long-term.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Prioritise the continuation of procuring and developing sites in the borough for schools, [the delivery of which can be supported by funding mechanisms which could include S106 or \(in future\) the Community Infrastructure Levy](#). Explore all options for retaining site allocations for community schools maintained by the local authority, as far as possible.

The right choice of schools – Meeting the needs of the local community

- 3.22 Members welcomed the work that Officers were doing to plan for school places in the borough as far as possible, but they were concerned that the ability of a Free School or Academy to open within the borough without much regard for the wider community's needs could undermine short and long-term planning and, in the future, lead to a two-tier system of education. It was noted that recent improvements in attainment, particularly at GCSE, were achieved through the community of maintained schools, led by the local authority. Members were concerned that free schools had the freedoms to choose their own admissions criteria or curriculum specialisms – or even proactive policies – to recruit only from certain groups or abilities which would undermine social cohesion and undermine the principle that all children should have equal access to a good education.
- 3.23 Members expressed their constituents' concerns about ensuring that the schools in the borough met the diverse needs of local residents. With regard to single sex schools, the Service Head for Learning and Achievement confirmed that there was no policy to reduce the number of single sex schools. She explained that the decision to extend provision in Bow School to girls was because there was a shortage of provision for girls in the East of the borough. It was discussed that Free Schools and Academies brought additional parental choice which could be both positive and negative depending on perspective. The tension facing the council is between providing choice and meeting the needs of all pupils.
- 3.24 Members reported that there is confusion amongst many parents about both the types of schools available locally and the admissions process, particularly around the catchment area system for primary schools.
- 3.25 Members heard about the work being done within Children's Centres and other under-five services on raising awareness of the admissions

process. They felt however that communications could still be made clearer, and expanded to other childcare establishments such as non-maintained or private nurseries who are less aware of the system, and proactively provided to parents online and via social media networks. Members reported that they had been approached by some parents who said that they found the information about the system complicated and often had difficulty understanding the best way to make their choices about preferences for schools. Members also reported that some parents had found it difficult to access the information they needed or to get responses to queries they raised, and others found it difficult to understand why certain decisions had been made about which school their child was placed in.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Review the provision of information to parents about the schools admissions process and allocation of places, to ensure it is flexible, user-friendly and understandable

- Consult with parents via the Parents Advice Centre project about the current information provided
- Explore alternative methods and formats, including digital options
- Re-assess user satisfaction with the information provided after each admissions round

3.26 There was a brief discussion about the catchment area system. Members reported that they had received enquiries from some parents who had lived close by to several schools but didn't get a place at any of them, because of the catchment area system. Members felt that residents have insufficient information to understand the system including knowing whether or not a school was likely to be over-subscribed before they moved into an area. Members also felt that they had insufficient information in order to support their constituents both before and after admissions decisions had been made. Officers reported that information on oversubscribed schools is included in the brochures parents receive when applying for a school place. There is also a dedicated website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/equalchance, which explains how the catchment area system works, together with a virtual map to enable parents to see which primary schools were in the catchment area for their address. It was acknowledged though that some parents still experienced challenges using the information to guide their decisions and preferences.

3.27 CliveGrimshaw from London Councils also advised Members of the London Schools Atlas hosted by the GLA. The website provides information about the projected need for school places in London. It shows details of schools across London, including the distribution of home addresses for pupils on roll. This indicates whether a school has a very local catchment area or recruits from a wider area <http://www.london.gov.uk/webmaps/lisa/>. It was agreed that this should be publicised to parents as part of the improved information package.

- 3.28 Officers explained that the Tower Hamlets catchment area model for primary schools was designed to improve accessibility for pupils to a school near to them, as schools are not distributed evenly around the borough. It has helped to significantly reduce the number of children having to travel to a school over two miles away. In terms of choice, officers reported that over 93%⁵ of pupils got a place in their top three choices of schools, with nearly 84% getting their first choice school. This compares favourably to the London average of 82% gaining a place in their first choice school. As more school places become available, it might be appropriate to revise the catchment areas in order to ensure fairness in accessibility. To this end, there is currently a proposal to change the geographical area for priority admission to community schools by removing the catchment area currently known as Area 3 (Bow South) and replace it by expanding both of the catchment areas currently known as Area 2 (Bow North) and Area 4 (Poplar).⁶
- 3.29 Members acknowledged the figures to show the majority of children are given their first choice of school, but were clear that nevertheless some still do not receive any of their top three choices. Members also reported that regardless of the statistics, there was still a perception of unfairness amongst some parents.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Provide more information and in a timelier fashion to Members about pupil places and admissions criteria to support them in dealing with residents' queries, especially on the day school places are announced.

- Provide information at ward level and borough-wide
- Provide information about the process at application time
- Provide summary information about the process and information on outcomes at decision time (for both secondary and primary places).

Working with schools which are their own admissions authorities

- 3.30 Despite the Cabinet's stance to oppose Free Schools and Academies, it was recognised that there was a real need for the school places and given the restrictions the Government has imposed on local authorities opening maintained schools, they may have to be part of the solution. In particular, free schools sometimes arise due to concerns from parents about a lack of sufficient school places locally or absence of the specific type of schooling they want for their children in their local area.
- 3.31 Members heard how Barking and Dagenham manages its pupil place planning. The borough decided to proactively support proposed free schools and academies, as the Department for Education prefers to allow schools with Local Authority assent, meaning it gives the council a

⁵ London Councils: <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/news/current/pressdetail.htm?pk=1478>

⁶ http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/851-900/867_consultation/school_admissions_for_2015.aspx?lang=en-gb

stronger negotiating position when talking to potential schools. As a result, Barking and Dagenham have secured agreement from all of the borough's free schools and academies that they have to use the LA's admissions policy. Free schools in particular have access to other capital that the Local Authority cannot lever in, so the borough feels its stance is a pragmatic way to deal with the growing need for school places.

- 3.31 The Service Head for Learning and Achievement advised Members of the work the service already does with Free Schools and Academies to secure support for some key joint principles for educating pupils in the borough. The Head of Pupil Admissions and Exclusions reported that the majority of Free Schools and Academies do follow the council's admissions policy. This is because the LA has worked with academies and free schools to seek to ensure that their admission arrangements are fair, accessible and serve the needs of local residents. This is a key provision in the Protocol the LA is devising for its work with Free Schools and Academies. Members agreed that given the context of legislation around opening new schools, it was important the council seeks to bring free schools and academies into the family of schools, to adhere to the council's standards and help meet the demand for school places.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Pursue efforts to bring free schools and academies within the strong family of community schools, supported by the local authority:

- Prioritise the development of a formal agreement with free schools and academies, to ensure they deliver education in line with the council's values around admissions, curriculum and standards.
- Seek Members' input to the draft 'Working with Academies and Free Schools protocol' prior to publication.
- Where new schools are agreed, continue to build positive relationships with them at the Member and officer level and sell the benefits of the family of schools, including council services on offer.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Local authorities, particularly in rapidly growing boroughs like Tower Hamlets, face a number of tensions in meeting the school places gap:
- Balancing the need for a sufficient number of places, in the right geographical areas, and providing the right types of schools to meet diverse community needs and parental choice
 - The mismatch between Government funding for school capacity and the realities of rapid population growth that outstrips resources
 - The legal responsibility to deliver a school place for every child versus the lack of control local authorities have to open new schools themselves, in the areas where they are needed
 - The unpredictability of supply and demand, given new academies and free schools can open without regard to local need or plans, and the timing of new housing developments cannot be controlled

- 4.2 Members acknowledge that these factors make short and long-term pupil place planning very challenging, but the recommendations seek to alleviate the growing problem, so that families better understand the system and can be assured there will be a place available for their child, at a good local school. By improving information for both parents and Members, seizing opportunities for expansion and procurement of new sites and proactively engaging with new schools that are approved in the borough, the council can more effectively meet the significant need for school places in future.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6.4

Committee: Overview & Scrutiny	Date: 4 th March 2014	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:
Report of: Cllr Ann Jackson, Chair of Working Group, Originating Officer(s): Vicky Allen Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer		Title: Removing Barriers to Youth Employment – Progress Report of the Scrutiny Working Group Ward(s) affected: All	

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report follows up from the scrutiny review removing barriers to youth employment which went to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2013. This report reviews the progress against the original recommendations.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the report findings
2. Consider whether further scrutiny into youth employment is required at this time, and should therefore form part of the work programme.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The “removing barriers to youth employment scrutiny report” went to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2013. The objective of the review was to investigate how the council and its partners could improve the support provided to young people to become work-ready, and helping to remove barriers to their employment. The review identified the importance of apprenticeships as a key route for young people into work. Initial analysis into the apprenticeship offer uncovered complexity within the system which could be confusing. The scrutiny working group therefore chose to focus on apprenticeships. The working group wanted to look at how the council could add value to maximize the apprenticeship agenda to benefit young people within the borough. The review therefore investigated the following areas:

- Understanding the supply of good quality apprenticeships and how this can be stimulated;

- Understanding demand for apprenticeships by young people; and
 - Supporting young people to access opportunities and be competitive in the labour market: how can the council add value to this agenda?
- 3.3 The scrutiny review found that the way in which the apprenticeship framework has been established has not helped to make this route into employment either clear or attractive. Many schools, parents and young people themselves have misconceptions about apprenticeships. The review found that the council has a key role to play in providing clear and accessible information which is widely available and publicised. In addition it found that there is a clear need for businesses in the borough to further support young people's career choices and employability by increasing the opportunities for pupils and school leavers to gain access to mentors and by improving their work experience offer.
- 3.4 The scrutiny review welcomed the good work already being undertaken as part of the Employment Strategy and its sub-groups. The review group felt that the council should support this good work by establishing itself as a facilitator and coordinator of apprenticeships, spreading good practice and coordinating the supply and demand in order to maximise benefits for the borough's young people.
- 3.5 The report made 8 recommendations which were agreed by OSC. The body of this report outlines the progress against these recommendations.

4. BODY OF REPORT

4.1 **Recommendation 1: Increase access to independent information advice and guidance for young people.** Service comment at action planning stage: The scrutiny report recognises the benefits reported by young people and schools that have arisen from the current Mayor's initiative to provide 1-2-1 individual careers guidance interviews with an action plan for all year 11 students. The funding for that project came to an end in July 2013. The service drew up three actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:

- Tower Hamlets Careers Service to provide independent impartial careers information advice and guidance
- Partnership agreements for delivery in schools and college outlining agreed delivery from institution and the careers service
- Ensure that there are links to external advisory services and independent information services are available on the re-designed web pages. Ensure that those services have access, via links, to information from the council on apprenticeships, skills and jobs

- 4.2 Comment from service: The Careers Service has continued to provide independent, impartial information advice and guidance to all maintained secondary schools in Tower Hamlets, Special Schools and the Pupil Referral Unit. The service also supports Tower Hamlets residents with Special Needs who are educated at special schools outside the borough providing Careers Guidance and S139 Transition plans as appropriate. Schools also have the opportunity to buy in additional services from our costed service menu, and partnership agreements are now in place for all schools and Tower Hamlets College.
- 4.3 The website redesign has been completed and is pending imminent endorsement by the Apprenticeship Task Group at which point it will be uploaded onto the website – this will be completed by the end of this financial year. The content will include:
- Links to the Council’s Employment and Skills Centre (Skillsmatch);
 - National Apprenticeship Service direct links to relevant information and national apprenticeship vacancies;
 - Careers Services direct links to local apprenticeship vacancies, skills advice and careers advice.
- 4.4 Scrutiny Comment Increasing access to independent information advice and guidance was highlighted by the Young People Preparing for Adulthood Task Group as a way in enabling more young people to gain a better understanding of the wider variety of jobs and improve their knowledge of how to conduct themselves in the work place. More information on take up of additional services from the Careers Service by mainstream schools and by Free Schools and Academies would help OSC to assess whether young people are getting the additional support they need. Although not yet live, the imminent redesign of the employment and training section of the council’s website will make it easier for young people to proactively navigate through the system themselves. It should not be forgotten that skills advice needs to stress, signpost and offer work experience and workplace conduct training in order to ensure young people are as prepared as possible to succeed.
- 4.5 **Recommendation 2: Support the development of a universal mentoring scheme.** Service comment at action planning stage: Mentoring has been recognised as a useful way to help young people overcome barriers to progression, to develop their career management and employability skills and provide support to implement their careers guidance action plan. The service drew up three actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:
- Tower Hamlets Careers Service will bid to access ESF funding to provide mentoring support for young people ‘at risk of NEET’ and those young people already NEET

- Commission voluntary sector to provide mentoring support as part of the ‘youth offer – getting young people working’ project.
- Utilise business mentors to support young people in developing their employability skills

4.6 Comment from service: The Careers Service won the ESF contract to work with NEET young people with whom we provide Careers Guidance, employability support, mentoring, submission and placing support with aftercare to ensure the young person sustains the placement. The service was also successful in securing a contract to deliver the “Youth Contact” which provides careers guidance, employability support, mentoring, submission and placing help as well as aftercare for young people on the NEET register who have 1 GCSE or fewer. The Pre-NEET contract for the North London Partnership which includes Tower Hamlets was won by Reed in Partnership.

4.7 The service has commissioned three voluntary sector organisations to deliver mentoring as part of the “Youth Offer”. The focus of the “Youth Offer” is to target and support the following target groups / areas in order to ensure that groups / areas that have been identified as a priority / or have a high NEET figure will be tackled:

1. Young people continuously refusing support
2. Young people from workless families
3. NEET & Unknown is high within particular LAP / geographic area

4.8 The three local voluntary sector groups who have been commissioned to deliver the Youth Offer are:

- City Gateway – delivering LAP 1 & 2 contract
- Society Links – delivering LAP 3 & 4 contract; and
- Streets of Growth – delivering LAP 5 & 6, and the LAP 7 & 8 contracts

4.9 The contracts have been signed by all delivery providers who are now in the delivery process. The contracts will bring significant advantages for NEET young people within the above localities with each locality aiming to achieve the following targets by March 2015:

- 15 young people tracked on a monthly basis until March 2015 (225yp)
- A minimum of 10 hours of employability & / or personal development courses
- 30 NEET young people supported over 16 months (mentoring, submission, placing and aftercare support)
- 60% (18) young people engaging into an Employability / Personal Development Course
- 35% (11) of young people securing Jobs and apprenticeships
- 85% (25) of young people securing Education, training or employment

- 4.10 Working in partnership with the voluntary sector groups will bring additionality to delivery as each provider works a unique range of young people, services and opportunities available within their own service, which will be accessible by NEET young people participating as part of the Youth offer.
- 4.11 Scrutiny Comment The review group felt that mentors were fundamental to supporting young people to achieve positive outcomes, especially where those mentors come from a work background that the young person is interested in joining. The “Youth Offer” contract provides much needed support for NEET young people, and OSC may be keen to review whether the targets outlined above are achieved. It was also stressed that the council work towards a universal mentoring scheme as this would increase positive results and young people’s success across the board and also help bridge the drop off in attainment at post 16.
- 4.12 **Recommendation 3: Work with the Education Business Partnership and businesses to improve the work experience offer for young people at school.** Service comment at action planning stage: Work experience is recognised as a practical ‘hands on way for young people to develop their employability skills’. Previous projects such as the NEET work experience project have proved successful in helping young people develop their skills and obtain sustained employment. The service drew up three actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:
- Work with the Education Business Partnership to promote the benefits of work experience to schools
 - Link work experience to transition into Apprenticeships / Traineeships building on the Carillion pilot project
 - To exploit relationships with local businesses from work on the council’s enterprise strategy to maximise the work experience opportunities for local young people. This must however take a realistic view of the current economic climate and their commercial priorities
- 4.13 Comment from service: The EBP is a key partner on the Apprenticeship Task Group and works closely with the Careers Service to promote the availability and quality of work experience placements for school-aged young people. The Economic Development service is working with Procurement to ensure that work experience placements and training opportunities are being embedded within the procurement processes as part of the Economic and Community Benefit package, and in line with the recommendations of the Fairness Commission in delivering a Business Charter which includes commitments to support local work experience placements. EBP is cited as a key contact both pre and post tender, to provide advice and guidance to businesses to help increase the number and ensure the quality of their work experience offer.

- 4.14 The Carillion pilot at the Tommy Flowers Centre (Pupil Referral Unit) has provided vital work experience to a vulnerable group of young people. The 'Youth Apprenticeship' (as named by the PRU) consists of one day a week work experience on site with Carillion, primarily in professional kitchens, with some office and construction work experience provided. The work experience contributes to students' studies, and builds to 2 days or more towards the end of the year. At the end of the programme, students will have the opportunity to experience an interview for an apprenticeship, or a full apprenticeship. It is an extremely competitive process – a necessity from the employer's perspective – which helps to increase the aspirational value of apprenticeships for students. This programme was developed to address the following issues:
- A two week work experience placement is not sufficient to be a truly helpful experience for students; the sudden shift to the pace in an adult 'world of work' is a shock for most and can put students off;
 - Providing a two week work experience placement is not an attractive proposition for many employers; it is felt to be an added annoyance to many, where they have to 'find something' for the young person to do; and
 - The EBP is able to offer 'extended work placements' of one day a week for 3 months plus, however this offer is expensive and schools cannot afford the offer.
- 4.15 Whilst the PRU has the flexibility to offer this type of programme, it is recognised that it is often not the case for mainstream schools who are more constrained over timetables.
- 4.16 Scrutiny Comment: The review group heard from young people whose negative impression of the work experience they had undertaken had led them to believe that apprenticeships would be the same. The review group were keen therefore to see the benefits of work experience promoted. It was also suggested that the council draw up some typical job descriptions for work experience to progress with larger and smaller employers, with standardised formats for attainment and final outcomes. This would allow the young people and the business to feel the undertaking was worthwhile. Providing aspirational opportunities to students and commitments from large businesses in Canary Wharf on offering more work experience are also being worked up as part of the Fairness Commission next steps. Progress on the activity to exploit relationships with local businesses from work on the council's enterprise strategy to maximise the work experience opportunities for local young people is covered in 4.33-4.36 of this report
- 4.17 **Recommendation 4: Increase employment opportunities of young people through introductory work experience.** Comment from service at action planning stage: This work has already begun through the activities in the Employment Strategy. The service drew up two actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:

- Commitments from employers to provide work experience opportunities will be introduced more comprehensively into the council's planning and procurement processes (following legal advice) to ensure an increase in available opportunity for workless residents including young people
- Review contracts and liaise with employers of existing contracts to prepare them for offering opportunities when their contracts are renewed. Initial interventions will start from September 2013

4.18 Comment from the service: The service is working through procurement processes to embed the provision of local labour, work experience placements for schools and longer term work experience placements, apprenticeships; and other training and mentoring services as part of all council procured services (see 4.34-4.37). Current contracts for which this is being embedded include Health and Social Care, Highways Maintenance and Improvement Works, service deliver, consultancy contracts. Work is ongoing between the Procurement and Economic Development Services to refine policy and processes which embeds this expectation.

4.19 Scrutiny Comment: Scrutiny recognises the work being undertaken through the procurement processes to embed work experience and apprenticeships into council procured services, but notes that there is currently less opportunities with medium and large organisations that operate in Canary Wharf or the City Fringes (see 4.16). It is hoped that the work of the Employment and Enterprise Task Group and the follow up of the Fairness Commission recommendations will enable more opportunities in these areas for young people.

4.20 **Recommendation 5: Improve online information about apprenticeships and other employment opportunities.** Service comments from action planning stage: As part of the Employment Strategy, it is recognised that fast easy access to current opportunities is essential. This work has already begun through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy. The service drew up three actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:

- Redesign of the council's web pages to include a more accessible set of information around employment, skills and training, which will include comprehensive information on apprenticeship for different audiences including pupils, teachers, parents, businesses, young people and training organisations
- Leaflets (online and paper) on applying for and securing positions, the range of educational and training opportunities available and employment rights. There will be links available to the range of local support available from Skillsmatch, the Careers Service and Youth Service as well as links to national organisations that can support
- Develop an Apprenticeship bulletin which will go on schools intranet to inform young people, their parents / carers and teaching staff of the

opportunities and support available. A url link will be sent by text / email to young people on the NEET register to highlight current opportunities for them

- 4.20 Comment from service: The new web pages are divided in four target audiences aimed at: young people interested in Apprenticeships, employers, schools and colleges, training organisations. The new web page content is awaiting imminent approval and will be live by the end of the financial year.
- 4.21 As mentioned in 4.3 above, the website includes hyperlinks to:
- Employment & Skills Centre (Skillsmatch) pages (which provides skills training, advice on CV, services for employers).
 - National Apprenticeship Services (general information for young people and employers).
 - Careers Centre pages (which contains advice for parents, young people and local catchment area apprenticeship vacancies).
 - Skills Funding Agency (advice for training organisations).
- 4.22 A separate Tower Hamlets Carers Service website includes interview tips, interview skills, tough interview questions, employment rights and a parent's guide to post-16 opportunities. Paper copies of the information are utilised in schools and with young people using the Careers Centre. An Apprenticeship Bulletin detailing opportunities in the local area is now in place and has been posted on the Tower Hamlets Carers Service website. This information is also circulated to schools. The Bulletin is updated every 2 weeks with latest opportunities.
- 4.23 The Apprenticeship landscape, and its partners, is constantly changing. It should be noted that there is no guarantee as to whether this website can be managed effectively in the future. As such the website can only direct users to websites that are effectively managed.
- 4.24 Scrutiny Comment: Communicating the apprenticeship route was a fundamental recommendation arising from this review. It is recognised that the revised web content is due to go live imminently, however it is somewhat frustrating that this has taken so long to achieve. We are again failing our young people by not focussing on this vital and essential part of the service, which was highlighted by them as the main problem in accessing opportunities. The careers service website, containing new content about apprenticeships can be found here: http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/jobs_and_careers/careers_service.aspx
- 4.25 It is acknowledged that there is a resource implication to managing these web pages, in order to ensure that it is kept current and would want to see this managed as a priority for the service.

4.26 **Recommendation 6: Raise awareness and improve the perception of apprenticeships in schools.** Comments from the service at action planning stage: It is recognised that whilst there are a range of exciting opportunities being developed (including Higher Level Apprenticeships) apprenticeships are not always seen by all teaching staff, young people and their parents / carers to be on a par with academic options and a good progression route for many young people. With the increase in tuition fees for Higher Education, it is important that all groups are aware of the apprenticeship route as another way into higher learning and earning. This work has already begun through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy. The service drew up two actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:

- Work across the Apprenticeship Task Group to ensure access to information is maximised and that the profile and benefits of apprenticeships are promoted within schools, particularly amongst education staff
- Carry out a number of briefing / INSET sessions for school staff to raise their awareness of the Apprenticeship route and the opportunities available. There will also be inputs for parents / carers at parents evenings and sessions directly working with young people setting out the routes available, opportunities and how to secure these

4.27 Comment from service: Access to information that raises the profile and promotes the benefits of apprenticeships to schools has been completed, through the newly designed web pages which will become live by end of March 2014. There is a dedicated officer whose job is to promote this work within secondary schools. The SLA post-16 Project Officer has carried out a range of training sessions for school staff on Apprenticeships including information on advanced and higher apprenticeships. There has been direct delivery to young people at assemblies, class sized group sessions and in individual careers guidance sessions with students. Information on Apprenticeships is also included in presentations to parents eg. 6th form open evenings.

4.28 Training is now available to staff in schools and four schools have been particularly conscientious in seeking this continuous professional development. However there is still work to do in promoting this agenda as some schools still have trepidations about the value of Apprenticeships compared to higher education and are reticent to engage across the board. The council is trying to tackle this issue through the work of the Apprenticeship Task Group and other partnership groups. Ofsted is now beginning to focus on the progression of all students, but performance is still measured by how many students progress to higher education.

- 4.29 Support to schools has begun, focussing on progression opportunities. In 2012/2013, three 'Introduction to Apprenticeship' events took place: Bow School 14th March 2013 and 24th October and at Central Foundation School 3rd July 2013. A targeted event looking at the different levels of Apprenticeship is planned for 26th March 2014 at Central Foundation School and there is an Apprenticeship Fair on 25th June 2014 at Bow School (new site).
- 4.30 Scrutiny Comment: Scrutiny recognises the difficulty of shifting perception about Apprenticeships when comparing with Higher Education options, especially as schools gain more independence from local authority control. With the embedding of the Apprenticeship agenda nationally, and the improved information on the council's web site, and greater and successful take up, it is hoped that there will be a shift change in teacher's perceptions which will in turn influence pupils and their parents.
- 4.31 **Recommendation 7: Support businesses to improve the quality of the opportunities they offer so they can become accredited apprenticeships.** The service made the following comment at action planning stage: The work has already begun to support businesses to improve the quality of the work placement opportunities they offer and that they develop more accredited apprenticeship opportunities. This is being done through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy. The service drew up two actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:
- Working across the Apprenticeship Task Group partners with particular influence from the National Apprenticeship Service as the government agency for this work, the apprenticeship agenda will be presented to Tower Hamlets businesses and engage with the agenda and promote the use of accredited apprenticeship opportunities
 - To identify training route-ways for growth sectors in the borough and promote apprenticeships as part of the offer for those sectors
- 4.32 Comment from service: A new web page aimed at supporting employers to hire young Apprenticeships from Tower Hamlets will be live by the end of the financial year. Handbooks and guidance are being developed as part of the work on the new Business Charter to educate businesses on the practicalities of recruiting apprentices. The current Business database holds details of 3,000 local organisations and the Service will be expanding this database to 7,000 over the next 12 months. In addition, a localised marketing campaign for the borough has been developed with the GLA which targets SMEs, promoting the economic benefits of recruiting Apprentices, such as staff retention rates.

- 4.33 The council is increasing the number of Apprenticeships available to young people in Tower Hamlets through obligations being embedded in the Economic and Community Benefits package for all Procurement contracts. This is an ongoing process. A pre-apprenticeship training course has been developed by the Economic Development Service to support young people to be ready to apply for an Apprenticeship position.
- 4.34 A number of training route-ways for growth sectors in the borough have been already been identified, and this work is ongoing. These three key growth sectors are construction, Health and Social Care, and IT. Currently proposals are being developed for Health and Child Care in partnerships with Public Health. A dedicated construction desk has been set up and is working with developers and contractors in the borough to identify innovation in construction methods that need to be incorporated into training provision to allow local residents to compete successfully in the construction labour market. This work is ongoing. Work is also ongoing to secure opportunities in the ICT sector via Tech City and the Olympic Park.

Where there are obligations for organisations to provide job, experience and apprenticeship opportunities for local residents, the council's Employment team work directly with each individual business to outline the options available to them on engagement recruitment and selection processes. The service will also offer pre-employment or pre-apprenticeship training for the clients to ensure they are suitably prepared for the vacancy available. Our advisers will discuss the needs of the business particularly around apprenticeships and the relevant training that needs to be associated with their sector or job offer. Where necessary the council meets with the business and the National Apprenticeship service to explain the terminology of a full term apprenticeship and the rules and procedures that are required to be followed in order to claim free training elements and any subsidies currently available.

Additionally where individuals are looking for apprenticeships in certain sectors which at that time do not exist, the Employment team will actively market the individual to local businesses in that sector with an additional wage subsidy to lower the cost to businesses of taking an apprentice. This has limited places available but has been successful in creating 20 new apprenticeships.

It is essential that businesses meet the required quality standard for both employment and training strands of the apprenticeship and these are monitored as part of the training and by the National Apprenticeship service as a matter of course. Additionally the Service provides an in work support element to local residents gaining these opportunities so that any issues can be resolved quickly enabling the individual to stay in the job.

- 4.35 Scrutiny Comment: There is a lack of information provided about how the council has supported businesses to improve the quality of their opportunities so that they can become accredited apprenticeships. The Information supplied above has only become available as this report was being written, leaving concerns about its delivery by the end of the financial year. Please again see 4.16 and 4.36. The council needs to be instilling the work experience platform, and guiding businesses to provide the apprenticeships wanted to ensure work for the future.
- 4.36 **Recommendation 8: Clarify the role of the council in the apprenticeship agenda and build on relationships with providers through the employment and enterprise task group.** The service made the following comment at action planning stage: The local authority has a role in developing the number of Apprenticeships available working closely with businesses and the National Apprenticeship Service and ensuring the local community is aware of the opportunities available, progression routes to access these and support to secure Apprenticeships and long term work. The service drew up three actions to support the implementation of this recommendation as follows:
- Embed the role of the council’s Economic Development team as the facilitator of the Apprenticeship Task Group by working alongside the National Apprenticeship Service and other partners including Education Business Partnership and schools.
 - Develop an Apprenticeship Action Plan
 - The apprenticeship agenda as a whole is a key element of work activity within the youth employment objective of the Employment Strategy action plan. The Economic Taskforce Operational Group will be responsible for carrying out these activities. The inaugural meeting for this group is scheduled for September 2013
- 4.37 Comment from service: The Economic Development service facilitates the Apprenticeship Task group and has embedded Apprenticeships into the wider strategy for recruitment and brokerage tasks. Many of the tasks involved in this action plan are inter-related and will continue to be a focus for the work of the Economic Taskforce to drive forward on the challenges of wider unemployment, employment and opportunity creation. This work is ongoing.
- 4.38 The Council has supported the development of the apprenticeship agenda both internally and externally. As of Q3 of 2013/14 the council has facilitated 245 apprenticeships for local TH young people, in addition to an expected 2,000 starts borough-wide (based upon Ref: 12/13 2300 starts across the borough – National Apprenticeship Service data), via a range of programmes, including construction S106, creative industries, Decent Home, Agilisys, internal Workforce Development. Its key role is one of promoting both opportunity and quality. This work is ongoing.

The development meeting for the revised Economic Task Force took place in late 2013. There has subsequently been a further meeting in February to agree key strands of work for development and membership for the operational group. This includes private sector business, business network, education leads both secondary and further education, Community and Voluntary sector lead, welfare reform lead, housing forum lead, economic development lead, supply chain lead and health lead.

Key members of the group will expertise have now taken tasks to develop specific tasks associated with three core strands of work: employment; enterprise & business; and skills. The Apprenticeship agenda will be an integral part of each strand as a cross cutting area of work linked to targeting young people moving from education to the labour market; upskilling with the skills that businesses want and targeting disadvantaged groups and supporting them to access the opportunities that are generated.

The apprenticeship task group members will all be involved in the development of actions going forward and very specifically around further enhancements of all points contained within this scrutiny review.

It should be noted that an apprenticeship is paid employment and therefore employers are key to the generation of these opportunities.

- 4.39 Scrutiny Comment: A request was made to the Economic Service to provide information about the inaugural meeting of the Economic Task Force Operational Group. We had concerns that the links needed and recommended by the review had not been implemented, information on this has been supplied now. It is hoped that the work needed here can be done in time.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 5.1 This report describes the review on removing barriers to youth employment Working Group for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.2 There are no specific financial implications emanating from this report except for recommendation R2 which would need to be contained within existing budget provision.
- 5.3 In the event that the Council agrees further action in response to this report's recommendations then officers will be obliged to seek the appropriate financial approval before further financial commitments are made in conjunction with Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Directorates as the lead Directorate for Youth Services and also the Council's external youth employment partners.

6. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 6.1 The Council is required by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants and may make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions. It is consistent with the Constitution and the statutory framework for the Executive to provide a response.
- 6.2 The Council does not have a specific employment power. It has, nevertheless, set out employment-related objectives in its sustainable community strategy for the purposes of section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 (set out in the Tower Hamlets Community Plan). In order to have a prosperous community in Tower Hamlets, the Council seeks to tackle worklessness and to improve educational aspiration and attainment. The Council has adopted an employment strategy to further these objectives. The Council may take action to pursue these strategies, provided that in doing so it acts in accordance with its statutory functions.
- 6.3 Several of the recommendations in the report are concerned with the provision of information, advice and guidance to young people. This is something that the Council may support. The Council has power under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do, subject to specified restrictions and limitations imposed by other statutes. It should be recognised that significant responsibility is given to schools in relation to career advice and guidance.
- 6.4 Section 42A of the Education Act 1997 makes it the responsibility of governing bodies of maintained, secondary schools (and the local authority in relation to pupil referral units which offer secondary education) to secure that pupils are provided with independent careers guidance during the relevant phase of their education. The guidance is required to –
- Be presented in an impartial manner;
 - Include information on options available in respect of 16 to 18 education or training, including apprenticeships; and
 - Be such as the person giving it considers will promote the best of the pupils to whom it is given.
- 6.5 The relevant phase of a pupil's education for such advice begins with the year in which the majority of the pupil's class attain the age of 14 and ends with the year in which the majority of the pupil's class attain the age of 16.

- 6.6 When considering any action to remove barriers to youth employment, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Around 27% of all JSA claimants in the borough are 16-4 years old, and the JSA unemployment rate for this age group is 8.5% which is around two percentage points higher than that of the working population (16-64). Around 5.4 of the London working age population are employed within the borough. The majority of people employed in Tower Hamlets are working in the financial and insurance industries, in business administration and support services, professional services, and information and communication. Apprenticeships, which mix working with training which leads to a recognised qualification, are a good way of enabling young people from the borough to be supported in their transition from school to work.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from the report. Risks relating to the recommendations will be monitored through the council's corporate risk register and directorate risk registers. Risks are assessed for likelihood and impact, and will have responsible owners and programmes mitigating actions.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct implications of crime and disorder as a result of the recommendations of this review.

11. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 11.1 The scrutiny review group met with council officers and partners to ask them what the council should concentrate on to add value to the apprenticeship

agenda. The scrutiny review concluded that by taking a coordination role for the borough through the Employment Strategy, the apprenticeship system would become clearer for young people and more efficient in terms of reducing duplications of services across the borough.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

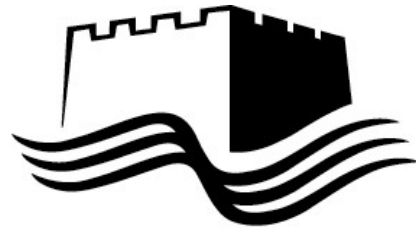
Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
--	---

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Review and Action Plan

Removing barriers to youth employment

Scrutiny Working Group Report



TOWER HAMLETS

**London Borough of Tower Hamlets
June 2013**

Acknowledgements

The Working Group would like to thank all the officers and partners that supported this review. Most importantly we would like to thank all of the young adults who attended the focus groups and offered their input to the review. These views and perspectives have been fundamental in shaping the final recommendations of this report.

Working Group Chair:Councillor Ann Jackson

Working Group Members:

Councillor John Pearce
Councillor Helal Abbas
Nahimul Islam (Young Mayor) (Co-optee)

London Borough of Tower Hamlets:

Phil Long	Youth Involvement Manager, ESCW Directorate
Andy Scott	Service Head Employment and Enterprise, D&R Directorate
Naznin Chowdhury	Employment & Enterprise, D&R Directorate
Chris Holme	Interim Corporate Director, Resources Directorate
Di Warne	Head of Secondary, Learning and Achievement, ESCW Directorate
Caroline Newte Hardie	Schools Apprenticeship Liaison, ESCW
Alan Davidson	Careers Adviser, ESCW Directorate
Steve Grocott	Service Manager Careers, ESCW Directorate
Jenny Dutton	Workforce Development Manager, Resources Directorate
Louise Russell	Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality
Daisy Beserve	Senior Strategy Policy and Performance Officer, Corporate Strategy and Equality
Vicky Allen	Strategy Policy and Performance Officer, Corporate Strategy and Equality

External:

Martin Reed	Director of Towerskills, Tower Hamlets College
Patrick Allen	Towerskills, Tower Hamlets College
Sammu Shummo	Business Development Adviser, Towerskills, Tower Hamlets College
Janice Swan	Careers Adviser, Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College

Young People Preparing for Adulthood Task Group

Anne Canning (Co-Chair), Interim Corporate Director, ESCW Directorate, LBTH
Stuart Johnson, Service Manager Youth Offending Service, LBTH
Harriet Potemkin, Commissioning Manager, Children with Disabilities, LBTH
Nazmin Yeahia, Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer, LBTH
Steve Grocott, Service Manager Careers, LBTH
Liz Vickerie, Head of Support for Learning Service, LBTH
Shahid Tilly, Service Manager Looked After Children, LBTH
Dinar Hossain, Head of Youth and Connexions Service, LBTH
David Hough, Service Manager Attendance and Welfare, LBTH
Khalida Khan, Service Manager Integrated Services for Disabled Children, LBTH
Nikki Bradley, Group Manager Family Intervention Programme and Family Support Cluster, LBTH
Carol Wallace, Barts Health NHS Trust

Mike Tyler, Director, Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership
Esther Trenchard-Mabere (Co -Chair), Associate Director of Public Health, LBTH
Esther Holland, Headteacher, Central Foundation Girls' School
Reha Begum, Public Health Strategist, LBTH
Fiona Wyton, (Voluntary Sector Rep) Director, Headliners

Chair's Foreword

The Coalition Government's welfare reform changes currently being implemented has placed a greater need to be in employment as benefits are reduced and access to them tightened. At the same time, the continuing economic recession has made getting a job more difficult for everyone and especially for young people, who may need additional investment in terms of individual support and guidance, job specific training and 'employability' skills.

The Government has not intervened in the UK job market of late, and has instead relied on encouraging corporate and financial growth as the way to bring prosperity and employment. Furthermore, I believe that no serious attempts have been made to consider how we get young people ready for work. There have been some partially successful schemes over the years, but there has been nothing that changes things for the better permanently. If such a scheme was found it would have a lasting impact that would ensure that it naturally continued under its own steam and thus take away the need to intervene at all.

It is my belief that our young people are administered to. They live in a world that tells them what to do constantly; to not speak but listen; do as they're told. When it comes to choosing they are not ready. They find themselves in a position where they have to choose; where they have to monitor themselves and know best. They are invariably influenced by parents, peers and teachers. Even with the best will, the advice given is not always in the young persons' best interests. Many give up here as they do not get the support, and cannot navigate their own way.

However, improving employment opportunities for young people in the borough has been a council key priority for a number of years. The council and other partners in the borough have a strong track record of providing access to jobs for local people, be that by direct employment, or by supporting them gain the necessary skills and qualifications to successfully compete in the open market.

As there has been a recent revival of the use of apprenticeships as a mechanism to address the youth employment issue and significant resources have been invested in developing and promoting them., The review group therefore felt it should focus its investigation on whether the council was doing everything in its power to ensure that these opportunities were maximised for our youth, although I don't necessarily agree with the focus being completely on apprenticeships. I especially wanted to seek out and listen to young people's views about what they felt would help them in their preparedness for apprenticeship work and their employability. I also spoke to young people about their experiences so far and how useful they felt training providers had been in supporting them.

I have highlighted the widespread use of mentoring, the need for greater information, and the refreshing the council's role, as issues I feel are particularly important in tackling youth unemployment.

- **Mentoring:** In researching the issue, I believe that there is a real need to provide mentors for every young person. Young people need a resource that they can rely on that focuses on helping them to develop as a person in their own right. I would like to see this effected through a coordinated, universal mentoring resource that is available to young people through the course of their secondary school life. With mentor encouragement, young people can

consider their options, gain confidence and motivation. Without mentoring opportunities, young people will not always gain the insight needed to see what educational training and careers are available to them, they are also less able to weather problems and issues faced on their journey; something that often derails even the most able academic person.

- **Information:** I have found that there is a huge opportunity to improve the quality and accessibility of the information available for young people, helping them to understand what happens at the end of their school career. I would like to see detailed and easy to understand information made available to young people on what to expect if you are going to look for work. This should include how to look for work, what the DWP will do, how the council can support them, how Skillsmatch and other providers can support them in getting a job, and what happens with benefits (benefits, training, housing). This will all help to provide a more rounded picture to prepare young people for adulthood.
- **Council's role:** I would like to see the council adopt a more custodial approach with partners to ensure the best outcomes are obtained for the boroughs young people. The better and more coherent the council is in what the opportunities are, the better it knows what else might be needed. It will be then be better able to influence funding in the borough, draw providers together and be able to effect results for youngsters. The council should also champion the drive to make sure that all opportunities advanced to young people are scoped to ensure that they appeal to both boys and girls, and just as easily accessible by them both. This work should be progressed by, and reported to, the Apprenticeship Task Group.

In addition to 5.4 in the report, it occurred to me since the report was finalised, that the borough's apprentices should be promoted to national employers such as BT, British Gas, EDF, British Transport, London Transport, and I would like to see this effected through the work of the Apprenticeship Task Group and the Employment Strategy.

These issues and others are further explored within the report. Please read the following review with the above in mind. If the council can review current processes to see what steps could be achieved towards the ideal what would be a real boost to our young people's chances for ongoing success at work.

I am grateful to my colleagues on Overview and Scrutiny for agreeing to prioritise a scrutiny review which looked into reducing barriers to youth employment. The Working Group's evidence gathering involved speaking to many individuals and organisations to reflect the complexity of the issues we were dealing with. Our recommendations are based on the evidence given by young people, Council officers, Towerskills, and school representatives. I would like to thank my fellow Panel members, Cllr Helal Abbas and Cllr John Pierce, who contributed their time and ideas. I would also like to thank all the young people, organisations and individuals that contributed their time and effort to this Review.

Please read the following review with the above in mind. If the council can review current processes to see what steps could be achieved towards the ideal what would be a real boost to our young people's chances for ongoing success at work.

Councillor Ann Jackson

Chair of Working Group and Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1

Increase access to independent information advice and guidance for young people

Recommendation 2

Support the development of a universal mentoring scheme

Recommendation 3

Work with the Education Business Partnership and businesses to improve the work experience offer for young people at school

Recommendation 4

Increase employment opportunities of young people through introductory work experience

Recommendation 5

Improve online information about apprenticeships and other employment opportunities

Recommendation 6

Raise awareness and improve the perception of apprenticeships in schools

Recommendation 7

Support businesses to improve the quality of the opportunities they offer so they can become accredited apprenticeships

Recommendation 8

Clarify the role of the council in the apprenticeship agenda and build on relationships with providers through the employment and enterprise task group

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In recent years, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken two reviews of youth unemployment: one on graduate unemployment in 2006/07 and another on reducing worklessness amongst young adults aged 18-24 in 2009/10. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were keen to take a fresh look at this issue to explore what the council and its partners can do to reduce youth unemployment in the borough. The Committee felt that it was appropriate to revisit this issue as, since the last reviews, the continuing global recession has depressed employment further especially for young people.
- 1.2 Improving employment opportunities for residents in general, and for young people in particular, has been a local priority for a number of years. The Mayor is delivering his pledge to create job opportunities to tackle youth unemployment. In addition, there are a number of multi-agency partnership groups which aim to tackle youth unemployment in the borough.
- 1.3 There are a plethora of organisations in Tower Hamlets which support young people in their options post 16. Statutory or publically funded organisations such as schools and the careers service provide support to young people throughout secondary school. Support for school leavers is provided through further or higher education institutes, the Council's Skillsmatch service, and Jobcentre Plus. Some information, advice and guidance is also available from the careers service for young adults outside of the school environment. The third sector plays a vital role in supporting young people in their transition from school to work especially for those who are furthest away from the jobs market. In addition, businesses play a central part in offering insight and exposure to the world of work as well as supplying job opportunities accessible for young people.

The role of the council

- 1.4 The council is a major employer, employing over 8,000 staff, and has an annual budget of over £1 billion. It is therefore well placed and committed to providing and facilitating employment opportunities for local people. This ambition is articulated in a number of key strategies, such as the Employment Strategy, the Children and Families Plan, and the Procurement Strategy. The council has a strong track record of providing local people with access to employment in the public sector. This involves work experience, apprenticeships, entry level posts and graduate jobs as well as career progression opportunities for targeted groups.
- 1.5 Furthermore, by working with businesses and providing employment training and job brokerage services, the council aims to secure economic benefits for local residents. Through its procurement policy, the council has inserted clauses into several major contracts to ensure employment and apprenticeship opportunities. There is a commitment to adopt this approach for all major contracts going forward.
- 1.6 The review group heard that the council's contribution to the total borough spend on information, advice and guidance, capacity building and employment preparation work is approximately 5%. Given its limited financial resources, the council's role as an influencer and an enabler is crucial in

helping young people to effectively access both pre job support and job opportunities.

- 1.7 A central tenet of national policy to tackle youth unemployment is the apprenticeship route. The Government promotes this agenda as being good both for business and for young people. Much of this review focuses on apprenticeship opportunities in Tower Hamlets.

Apprenticeships

- 1.8 Members identified the crucial role that businesses can play in supporting young people to become work-ready. This is done in a number of ways including mentoring, providing work experience, apprenticeships and direct employment. Given the national emphasis on apprenticeships, the working group chose to investigate the apprenticeship route in particular, focusing on what the council could do to facilitate appropriate support for young people to successfully compete in the job market.
- 1.9 Apprenticeships are time limited jobs with in-built education training and progression opportunities. They are promoted as an alternative to full time higher education. Apprenticeships have undergone a renaissance in the past few years. The huge growth in the number apprenticeship opportunities both nationally and regionally (figure 1) is a response to concerns about skills shortages which businesses have themselves identified as a barrier to young people accessing jobs. The training element of apprenticeships is designed to reflect the vocational and academic qualifications that businesses are asking for.



Figure 1: Apprenticeships in London

- 1.10 The National Apprenticeship Service promotes the benefits of apprenticeships for businesses as: increasing productivity, improving competitiveness, and creating a committed and competent workforce which suits business needs. In addition, they promote the cost benefit of hiring apprentices. The National Apprenticeship Service has responsibility for the delivery of apprenticeships throughout England. This includes services for employers, learners, and a web-based vacancy matching system. The service is also responsible for promoting apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.
- 1.11 There has been a sustained media campaign to raise awareness of apprenticeship opportunities. The Mayor of London, the Mayor of Tower Hamlets and many organisations and private businesses have been promoting the apprenticeship route into employment for young people. The Mayor of London has committed to increase the number of apprentices across

London to 250,000 by 2016, building on the 88,630 new apprenticeship starts over the last two years.¹

- 1.12 For National Apprenticeship week (March 2013), the council hosted an event ‘celebrating employment and opportunity’ at the Town Hall, celebrating the achievements of local people including apprentices, graduates, interns, jobseekers and trainees. Awareness raising events have also been held around the borough for young school leavers who are considering becoming an apprentice.

2 OBJECTIVES OF REVIEW

- 2.1 The objective of this review was to investigate how the council and its partners could improve the support provided to young people to become work-ready, and help remove barriers to employment.**

- 2.2 As part of the review, a progress report was provided on the two recent scrutiny reviews on youth unemployment to understand which recommendations had been successfully implemented and where learning from the previous reviews could be used as a basis of recommendations going forward.

- 2.3 The progress report identified the importance of apprenticeships as a key route for young people into work. Initial analysis into the apprenticeship offer found complexity within the system which could be confusing to young people. The scrutiny working group therefore chose to focus on apprenticeships. They wanted to ask how the council could add value and maximise the potential of the apprenticeship agenda for local young people.

- 2.4 The review set out to investigate the following areas:
- The demand for apprenticeships by young people.
 - The supply of good quality apprenticeships and how this can be stimulated.
 - Supporting young people to access opportunities and be competitive in the labour market: how can the council add value to this agenda?

3 METHODOLOGY

The following methodology for the review was agreed by the working group:

- 3.1 Introductory meeting
- The working group received a progress report on previous scrutiny reviews of youth unemployment.
 - The group also received a presentation on the local labour market and job opportunities for young people from the council’s economic development service.
 - This aided in setting the scene. The scope of the review was refined at this point to focus on apprenticeships because of both their high profile and their huge potential to reduce local youth unemployment.

¹<http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/business-economy/apprenticeships>

- 3.2 Focus Group meetings
- Focus groups with young people of different ages, being supported by various institutions including schools, Skillsmatch and Towerskills (training provider).
 - The young people were consulted on their experience of navigating the post-16 options available to them. They were also asked about their perception of apprenticeships.
- 3.3 Meeting with the Young People Preparing for Adulthood Task Group
- The Chair attended this partnership group to seek their views on issues in the apprenticeship ‘system’ and any action the council and its partners could take to support the reduction of youth unemployment.
- 3.4 Visit to Tower Hamlets College (Towerskills)
- The Chair visited Towerskills to hear about their work in preparing young people to undertake successful apprenticeships.
 - This included a visit to an apprenticeship screening session where applicants are interviewed for apprenticeship positions by businesses.
- 3.5 Concluding meeting: adding value to the apprenticeship agenda
- Officers from Learning and Achievement, the careers service and those working on apprenticeships discussed how to raise awareness and improve the perception of apprenticeships within schools.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 This section provides a brief profile of young unemployed people in Tower Hamlets. An analysis of recommendations arising from the previous scrutiny reviews and how they have been implemented is summarised, the full report is appended to this report.

4.2 Profile of young unemployed people and local employment opportunities

4.2.1 There has been a general downward trend in youth unemployment rates in Tower Hamlets, bucking the London trend. This could be attributed to the increase in job opportunities available in the borough, a return to education or a reaction to the recent changes in welfare benefits—more Tower Hamlets residents are affected by the benefit cap than in many other areas.

4.2.2

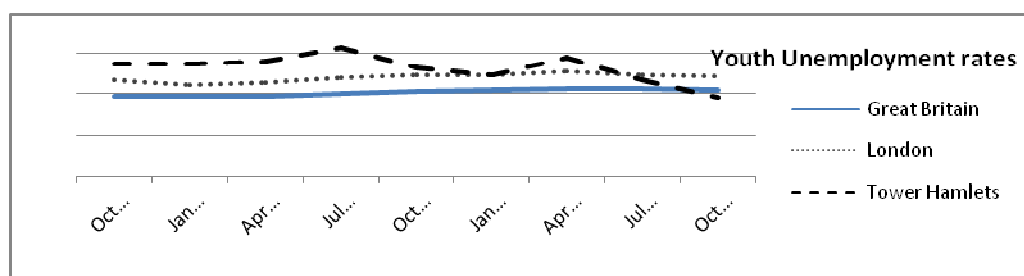


Figure 2: Youth Unemployment Rates

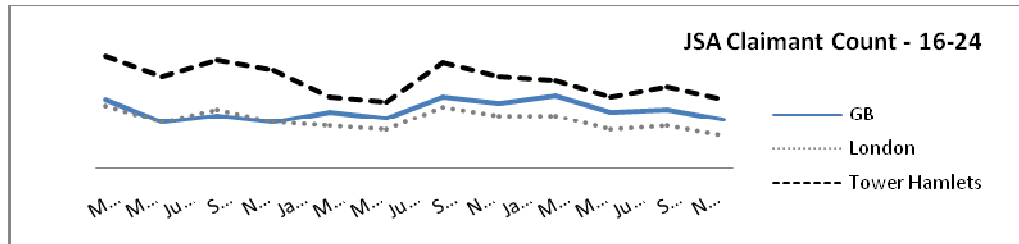


Figure 3: JSA Claimant Count 16-24

Data from the Office for National Statistics (September 2012) identified 4,100 young people in Tower Hamlets aged 16-24 as unemployed, representing 19.1% of the cohort. This is lower than the London and national average, although may reflect the high student population which is included in the figures.

- 4.2.3 However, the percentage of young unemployed residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance is higher than both the London and national average. Not all unemployed people can claim this benefit and it also excludes students who are not actively seeking work.
- 4.2.4 The borough's NEET rate is 5.6% which is below the London average, however many other London boroughs have a significantly worse NEET rate than Tower Hamlets. NEETs are young people in school years 12-14 equivalent (encompassing 16-19 year olds) who are not in employment, education or training. Since the beginning of 2012, between 250 and 400 young people have been identified as being NEET, out of a cohort of around 17,600². The majority of NEETs are in year 14 (46%) followed by year 13 (31%) both of which are currently outside of the statutory school age.
- 4.2.5 The majority of NEETs are so for three months or less. Where the reason why a young person is NEET is known, most said that they were seeking employment, education or training. The borough's NEET Reduction Strategy outlines the activities taken to reduce the number of NEETs, including support provided by the Careers Service and targeted youth support such as the Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme.

Local employment opportunities

- 4.2.6 The Office for National Statistics estimates there are 328,000 people employed in the borough. This accounts for around 5.4% of all employment in London, with only Westminster, the City of London and Camden having more jobs.
- 4.2.7 The majority of people employed in Tower Hamlets are working in the financial and insurance industries (32%), in business administration and support activities (11.7%), professional services (9.7%), information and communication (9.7%), health (6.8%) and accommodation and food services (4.6%). However given the number of people who commute into Tower Hamlets for work, these statistics are not necessarily a reflection of the jobs undertaken by the borough's young residents.

²Data from 15 billion December 2012.

- 4.2.8 The economic development team presented the working group with information on the economic and job situation, both globally, London wide and specific to Tower Hamlets. The group heard that the borough has both a higher job density ratio compared to London (1.28 in Tower Hamlets compared to 0.88 in London), and a higher median gross weekly pay (£643 in Tower Hamlets compared to £610 in London). The higher gross weekly pay is attributed to the large number of well-paid jobs available in the Canary Wharf and City Fringe employment hubs.
- 4.2.11 The review group received analysis of Jobcentre Plus and Skillsmatch statistics relating to December 2012. They showed a disparity between the jobs sought and the jobs available to residents in the borough. Nearly half of the young people registered with Skillsmatch are seeking office work, and work in the service industries is the second most popular. However just under 10% were placed into office work. The majority were placed in the service industries (retail, hospitality and transport), followed by skilled trades such as security. Jobcentre Plus statistics show that the top job sought by workless people in the borough relates to sales and retail, with 2,930 people registering their interest in this, compared with just 45 vacancies in this sector advertised through Jobcentre Plus. 995 people sought general office assistant/clerk roles, yet there less than 25 vacancies of this nature. This would support the councils' offering more guidance to young people on what work was available and this is looked at in more depth in section 5.5.15.

4.3 Learning from the past: an analytical review of previous scrutiny recommendations

- 4.3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously undertaken two reviews of youth unemployment:
- Graduate Unemployment (2006/07) and
 - Reducing Worklessness Amongst Young Adults 18-24 (2009/10).
- 4.3.2 Analysis of progress arising from these two reviews was undertaken as a starting point for the current review. A progress report considered the key changes which have impacted on the implementation of recommendations, including changes in national policy, budget reductions, and council directorate restructures. The most recent scrutiny review was approved by Cabinet in February 2010, three months before the general election brought in a change of Government and a significant reduction in public sector funding. Furthermore, the double-dip recession has depressed the UK economy and the jobs market since 2008, the year after the first review.
- 4.3.3 Reducing Worklessness Amongst Young Adults (09/10) looked at how the council can support young adults in improving their chances of securing employment, focusing on the information and guidance available, the number of providers in the borough, and examining the role of the third sector in reducing worklessness. Graduate Unemployment (06/07) investigated graduate underemployment and employment in Tower Hamlets, exploring the perception that local graduates face more barriers in accessing appropriate employment opportunities than graduates in other areas. It also looked at the problems that arise when graduates attempt to make the transition from education to employment. The majority of recommendations were implemented either fully or partially, but the report identified a number of areas where further progress could be made.

Evaluation of recommendations

- 4.3.6 The previous reviews looked at both improving the quality of, and increasing the number of apprenticeships both within the council and with the council's partners. There has been good progress in achieving this objective and the council has significantly improved both the range of job training activities and the number of local young people accessing them. However, given the council's reduced resources, it was recognised that it is not feasible to increase the number of apprenticeship placements directly employed within the council.
- 4.3.7 Both reviews investigated improving communications with young adults and widening the reach of less traditional methods of employment-related training and advice. The progress report found that there is currently no specific communications strategy which publicises the third sector employment support available in the borough, although the council is working to address this. There are communication links between Skillsmatch, Job Centre Plus and some third sector organisations, but these are not comprehensive. Promotion by and of the third sector through council channels is ad-hoc, and on an individual basis rather than as a collective, which may impact on their visibility to young people.
- 4.3.8 The Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service website promotes the third sector offer. However, its search facility is limited and it is not easy for people seeking employment to undertake independent job searching. Officers advised the working group that both the AMP (the council's website aimed at young people) and the Skillsmatch websites are due to be re-developed to improve their look, content and links to other sites. The intention is for the AMP website to show up to date training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- 4.3.9 The previous reviews looked at how to improve information, advice and guidance within schools so young people are better informed and reduce their risk of becoming unemployed in the future. As part of their curriculum, schools work with young people to develop their career management and employability skills. However, pressure on curriculum time means that employability skills development can be patchy and does not always lead to accreditation. The council continues to act as an influencer in shaping the careers and employability curriculum of schools through various partnership groups. It has been recognised that there is a need to provide more information to young people so they can make informed and realistic decisions on their progression routes, matching their skills, abilities and aspirations to the opportunities available.

5. KEY FINDINGS

- 5.1 There were three areas which the review sought to investigate, these are considered in turn in this section:
- The demand for apprenticeships by young people.
 - The supply of good quality apprenticeships and how this can be stimulated.
 - Supporting young people to access opportunities and be competitive in the labour market: how can the council add value to this agenda?

5.2 A summary of employment support provision for young people including contributors of post-16 support and a description of apprenticeships was mapped to support the review.

5.3 Understanding the demand for apprenticeships from young people

Perception of apprenticeships

5.3.1 The review group heard evidence from several contributors that many people had a low perception of apprenticeships. This needs to be raised to make them an attractive option to young people.

5.3.2 In the focus groups, young people of varying ages gave their impressions of apprenticeships as a way of accessing employment. A significant number held positive views about apprenticeships and were planning to take this route after completing their GCSEs. The young people in the focus groups who were already apprentices had a positive experience and they felt that their employers were supportive. However some young people were under the impression that apprenticeship work would be boring, these views were based on work experience they had completed in the past. Others felt that taking the apprenticeship route at a young age would be too narrowing career-wise.

5.3.3 A high proportion of the young people perceived apprenticeships as 'cheap labour' and they reported this was a view their parents held also. The difference between the apprenticeship minimum wage of £2.65 and the national minimum wage for 16-18 year olds of £3.68 for 16-17 year olds and £4.98 for 18-20 year olds is seen as evidence of this. The working group heard that many businesses request apprentices who are aged between 16-18 years old, because they often attract higher funding which means lower initial costs to the business.

5.3.4 Anecdotal evidence suggests that many teachers have a poor perception of apprenticeships and tend to encourage academically gifted pupils to continue onto A Levels and progress to higher education. With the raising of the participation age to 18, many secondary schools have increased and widely advertised their post-16 offer to compete with the other options open to young people.

5.3.5 The review group heard about the emerging apprenticeship opportunities in and around the borough. The construction industry, a growth area in terms of opportunities available, is often overlooked by young people who wrongly perceive it as temporary work, limited to manual labour, and therefore not a good career opportunity.

5.3.6 Section 5.5.14 looks at how the council could improve employment opportunities for young people in the borough by improving the perception of apprenticeships to ensure they are considered as a credible post-16 option.

5.4 Understanding the supply of good quality apprenticeships and how this can be stimulated and simplified.

Growth

5.4.1 There has been a huge growth in the number of apprenticeship opportunities available for young people in recent years. Statistics from london.gov show that the number of apprenticeship opportunities in London has more than doubled.

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	England	London	England	London	England	London
Number of apprenticeship starts	279,700	20,350	453,000	41,400	515,000	47,230
Number of apprenticeship completions	171,500	11,780	198,800	14,550	231,300	19,240

Table 1: Apprenticeships in London and England

5.4.2 However, the number of apprenticeship completions has not grown at the same rate. This may be explained by a time lag in reporting, by the lack of support, such as screening, to ensure suitability or the lack of in-post support available to some apprentices. It could also be because young people have not understood the structure of apprenticeships, under-estimating the training and education element of the placement.

5.4.3 The review group heard from the Careers Service that access to apprenticeships was increasing year on year locally. Data from the National Apprenticeship Service website shows that approximately 1,080 young people started an apprenticeship in 2011/12, and 1,750 young people who already were undertaking an apprenticeship. The local completion rate, at around 68%, is better than the national and regional average.

Age	Level	Apprenticeship starts			Apprenticeship participation		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
16-18	Intermediate	267	404	414	409	557	611
	Advanced	53	82	91	81	126	131
	Total	320	486	505	490	683	742
19-24	Intermediate	224	382	397	331	538	664
	Advanced	88	161	183	150	259	343
	Higher	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	5
	Total	313	545	583	482	800	1,012

Table 2: Apprenticeships in Tower Hamlets

5.4.4 The review group heard about the various levels of apprenticeship opportunities. Intermediate is Level 2 (GCSE level), advanced is Level 3 (A Level level), and higher is Level 4 (Foundation Degree level). Apprenticeships are available to masters degree level (level 7) and these are geared towards older age groups. In Tower Hamlets there are around 560 apprenticeship starts and 1,000 participants aged 25+.

- 5.4.5 National Apprenticeship Service data shows the 25 different sectors that young people from the borough are employed in. A breakdown of apprenticeships by sector for 2011/12 shows that the majority work in³ lifelong learning, adult social care, hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism, construction, health care and building services and engineering.

Encouraging local businesses to offer more apprenticeship opportunities to local young people

- 5.4.6 Several contributors felt that there was scope to increase the number of apprenticeships offered by the businesses in Canary Wharf and the City Fringe, as well as in other business sector. The review group heard about the range of measures being put in place by the council to lessen the bureaucratic burden for businesses wishing to hire an apprentice, such as supporting their set up on the National Apprenticeship Service website. Both the council and Tower Skills encourage businesses to offer an apprenticeship on a trial basis to mitigate against mis-matching. The council also encourages businesses to ring-fence a percentage of their apprenticeship opportunities for young people from Tower Hamlets.
- 5.4.7 However, the economic development service stressed that the engagement, relationship building and influencing of businesses, necessary to develop these apprenticeship opportunities, is a time consuming and delicate process. This negotiation can be difficult given the current economic climate and businesses ability to afford to hire apprentices. The review group Chair felt that the service could initially focus negotiations in priority growth areas in the borough, such as construction as this could encourage better outcomes and job success for young people.
- 5.4.8 The role and responsibilities of local business, particularly in creating employment opportunities for Tower Hamlets residents is a key concern of the Tower Hamlets Fairness Commission. It is anticipated that their report and recommendations will also address this issue.

Skills and qualifications

- 5.4.9 Young people from Tower Hamlets need to be able to compete effectively with both national and international job seekers in the London job market. The review group heard that although many businesses are committed to local recruitment, their primary goal is to recruit people who will best support their business to grow and make a profit.
- 5.4.10 The Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey 2011 shows that the number of young people in Tower Hamlets obtaining higher level qualifications has improved and there are less people with no qualifications. There are more young people resident in Tower Hamlets with a degree or equivalent than London on average; however this data does not identify whether those educated to degree level or higher grew up in the borough. The GCSE 5 A*-C including Maths and English rate is above the national average but below the average for London. At A Level however, the average

³These sector categories are self-selected by the apprenticeship provider and are not scientific; the majority of young people are doing an apprenticeship where the sector has not been disclosed.

point score per pupil in the borough is below both the national and London average. A concurrent scrutiny review of post-16 attainment is considering this issue in more detail.

5.5 Supporting young people to access opportunities and be competitive in the labour market: how can the council add value to this agenda?

Support in schools for young people preparing for work

- 5.5.1 The review group heard from the Young People Preparing for Adulthood (YPPA) task group who said they wanted to see access to careers, mentoring and work experience opportunities increased for young people. This would enable more young people to gain a better understanding of a wider variety of jobs and improve their knowledge of how to conduct themselves in the work place.
- 5.5.2 Since September 2012, although local authorities retain their duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training, schools have been allowed to provide or procure this service independently. A recent publication commissioned by the GLA and London Councils argued there was a role for local authorities to become careers services champions, encouraging schools to purchase or provide impartial careers guidance to all pupils. They also argued councils should share and encourage best practice between schools.
- 5.5.3 The review group heard that, depending on how and where young people accessed their post-16 options, there was a risk that they could be steered into a solution which was inappropriate to them. The careers service suggested that, through partnership agreements with providers of post-16 support, there should be a formal referral mechanism for any young person who was unsure of their next steps to the careers service for independent information, advice and guidance.

Recommendation 1: Increase access to independent information advice and guidance for young people.

- 5.5.4 The YPPA task group and the careers service spoke of the positive outcomes for young people who have a mentor. There are a wide range of mentoring programmes provided both through intermediary organisations and by individual businesses directly engaged with schools. These views were reinforced by Year 11 pupils from Stepney Green Maths, Computing and Science College who spoke positively about the business mentors they had been linked with, although some pupils expressed a desire to have a mentor who worked in the career of their interest.
- 5.5.5 The review group were supportive of the current initiative from the Mayor which provides an 1:1 careers interview and action plan for all young people in Year 11. Recognising that this funding was no longer available, the review group thought that providing universal access to mentors could support young people in working towards their career goals. Ideally every year 11 pupil should have an opportunity to work with a mentor. The review group therefore asked that the council explore the option of commissioning the voluntary organisations currently undertaking this role, the CVS, or a partnership of several organisations, to drive the recruitment of mentors and provide training

to them, with support from the council's careers service. This could be co-ordinated through the Apprenticeship Task Groups and should involve the development of some sort of portal which matches mentors and mentees, as well as a set of standards with clear expectations of both mentors and mentees.

- 5.5.6 The review group Chair further investigated how the mentoring offer could be realized by speaking to the Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and looking into the work of the East London Business Alliance (ELBA). The Chair commented that she felt that an ideal situation would be that professionals volunteered to be mentors, chosen in the needed thriving job fields identified by the council and also wanted by young people. A professional mentoring plan is then drawn up and followed. This would then lead to the young person being able to join their mentors company for work experience. Drawing up job descriptions would ensure that the work experience was seen by both the young person and the company as credible and worthwhile. Besides better outcomes and enthusiasm for work experience than there is presently, it also could potentially open doors for the young person to apply for a job with that company at a later stage. The Chair felt that the Careers Service could be involved in the process by helping with mentoring supervision.

Recommendation 2: Support the development of a universal mentoring scheme

- 5.5.6 The review group heard from some young people whose negative impression of the work experience they had undertaken had led them to believe that apprenticeships would be the same. Furthermore, contributors to the review felt that many young people were too immature to successfully participate in an apprenticeship as they lack basic life skills such as punctuality, attendance, being well presented, being able to work in a team, and a positive attitude.
- 5.5.7 The Schools Apprenticeship Liaison Officer advised the review group of a new work experience model being piloted from September 2013 which aims to support less mature young people's transition into apprenticeship work. The pilot will provide the opportunity to spend one day per week, for a whole term, at Carillion. This would be available to 17 and 18 year olds and would contribute towards their BTEC coursework. The pilot will test whether this model makes it easier for employers to develop a programme of work activities for young people, which the young people would, in turn, find more stimulating. The review group expressed an interest in hearing more about the pilot after its first year.

Recommendation 3: Work with the Education Business Partnership and businesses to improve the work experience offer for young people at school

- 5.5.8 Evidence was received about the work experience available to young people who had left school and were unemployed. This is arranged by Skillsmatch through its 'routeway to work' initiative, and by Jobcentre Plus. All young people who are interested in working in construction undergo work experience prior to being applying for a position in the industry. The council has introduced work experience requirements of businesses as part of its contract

procurement and planning negotiations. The aim is that once introduced that young person, the business will be willing to offer them employment.

Recommendation 4: Increase employment opportunities for young people through introductory work experience.

Information

- 5.5.9 All apprenticeship positions are advertised online on the National Apprenticeship Service website. However, a mapping exercise found that there were a number of routes into them:
- Applying directly through the National Apprenticeship Service website where the majority of apprenticeship opportunities are advertised by private businesses.
 - Applying through a training provider who also advertise opportunities;
 - Being referred by Jobcentre Plus to a training provider, via the Department for Work and Pensions Youth Contract.
 - Through the council's Skillsmatch service. Small employers recruit directly from the service and apprenticeships opportunities arising from the Council's procurement obligations and Section 106 agreements are facilitated by this service.
 - Applying directly to a business or organisation offering apprenticeships such as the council. Some businesses and organisations recruit apprentices directly, managing the recruitment, selection and training themselves.
- 5.5.10 Amongst the YPPA task group there was a consensus that a comprehensive and easily accessible directory of apprenticeships and post-16 support should be produced. This echoed the findings of past scrutiny recommendations. The YPPA task group argued that the process of applying for an apprenticeship should be made much clearer, specifically that in order to apply for an apprenticeship position, young people should use the National Apprenticeship Service website.
- 5.5.11 The review group felt the most appropriate host of this information was the council's website. This would enable easy maintenance and ensure it reached a wide audience. Information on how to access local support to become 'apprenticeship ready' should be included as well providing links to the National Apprenticeship Service, Skillsmatch, the AMP website and other training providers. It should also include some broader information about the economic development work undertaken by the council.
- 5.5.12 The review group heard evidence from the youth service about the innovative ways in which they communicate with young people through social media, and felt that social media, such as Facebook and text alerts should complement the council website in promoting this information.
- 5.5.13 Mirroring the findings from previous scrutiny reviews into youth unemployment, the review group thought that the user-friendliness and functionality of the Skillsmatch and AMP websites should be improved. During focus group discussions with young people, the review group found that the AMP website was not well known or used. There is currently no information on the AMP website about apprenticeships and this should be addressed. The 2012/13 Young Mayor spoke about his project to refresh the

AMP website with the aim of developing it to include a searchable tool with live training and job information. The aim is to employ an apprentice (paid from the Young Mayor's budget) to update this information on a daily basis. It is not clear if this will be carried forward under the new Young Mayor.

Recommendation 5: Improve online information about apprenticeships and other employment opportunities

Awareness

- 5.5.14 A lack of awareness and poor perception of apprenticeships in schools, and amongst parents and young people was identified as an issue by a number of contributors to the review. The Learning and Achievement Service stressed the need to improve understanding of apprenticeships so they are seen in an equal light to the traditional university route. It should be emphasised that they are jobs with built in education and training, leading to recognised qualifications. The range of educational levels available within the apprenticeship offer should be highlighted, to discourage the view that they are inferior to the traditional higher education route. This could be achieved by providing training to staff, focusing on the opportunities available for more academically able young people, at levels 3, 4 and above.
- 5.5.15 The review group also thought more could be done to promote different sectors, for example the construction and catering industries. The group considered it vital to produce briefings for schools on the local labour market, broadening staff and young people's understanding of the future job opportunities available.
- 5.5.16 The Learning and Achievement service also highlighted the role of the parental engagement team in communicating to parents about the apprenticeship agenda. This information should also be communicated to anyone else who works with young people and are an influence, such as youth workers.

Recommendation 6: Raise awareness and improve the perception of apprenticeships in schools.

Improving the apprenticeship offer

- 5.5.17 Apprenticeships have to adhere to a set of minimum standards which cover hours, duration, English and maths requirements and new learning and skills expectations. These are set out by the National Apprenticeship Service. Work to further improve on these standards has been identified as a key issue in making them a more attractive option to young people.
- 5.5.18 The council and some training providers support businesses to raise the quality of their job opportunities to ensure education and training provided in-work was of a high standard and fully met the standards set out by the National Apprenticeship Service. Towerskills have a due diligence test they aim to undertake with all businesses they work with. The council are also developing an apprentice quality standard for businesses to adhere to. Towerskills welcomed the opportunity to work in partnership with the council to develop a borough-wide quality standard for apprenticeships for young people from the borough, regardless of who they were registered with.

Apprentices who drop out because of a poor experience are hard to replace, adversely affecting the experience of the business and the young person.

- 5.5.18 With regard to wages, the review group heard how the council and Towerskills encourage businesses to offer more than the statutory apprenticeship rate, although businesses are under no obligation to do this. Towerskills encourages businesses to offer at least £5.00 per hour but they are financially unable to top up wages for those who can't. The council are able to offer some financial incentives in the form of top ups for apprenticeships who are paid the statutory apprenticeship wage. The council has pledged that apprentices employed directly by the council or its contractors will be paid the London Living Wage of £8.55 per hour.

Recommendation 7: Support businesses to improve the quality of the opportunities they offer so they can become accredited apprenticeships.

Supporting apprentices to complete their apprenticeships

- 5.5.19 National Apprenticeship Service data indicates that young people from Tower Hamlets have a better apprenticeship completion rate than the London average. The review group heard evidence on the importance of providing pre-apprenticeship support, such as that provided by the council and its partners. It ensures young people find the right opportunity for them, and supported to prepare through short courses and training which will help them secure a position. There is strong competition for good apprenticeships; nationally around 20,000 young people per month are unsuccessful in their application.
- 5.5.20 The Director of Towerskills spoke about how they support young people into apprenticeship positions. Towerskills provides a brochure for both employers and employees outlining the process, role and responsibilities of each, setting out what each party can expect from Towerskills as a training provider. The brochure is tailored to specific job sectors or to organisations which are recruiting several positions. A rigorous selection procedure has been put in place to help ensure that only candidates with the appropriate skills and qualifications are put forward for interview. Candidates are asked to undertake a two week employability programme to help them to understand the structure and demands of an apprenticeship role. The programme also reinforces key competencies such as time management, teamwork and communication skills. At a Towerskills event the review group Chair spoke to young people who had successfully undertaken this two week programme and had been invited to be interviewed by businesses wishing to hire apprentices.
- 5.5.21 Towerskills also advised the review group of the job coaches they were offering to some apprentices who had been identified as being in need of in-work support. The job coach provides intensive business and life skills to support young people for a few weeks until they find their feet at work. They had supported many young people to continue their employment by providing practical support such as ensuring young people were able to prepare the route to work so that they could get to work on time, and how to manage working relationships with colleagues. Towerskills believe all apprentices would benefit from having a job coach, but they don't currently have the capacity to offer this.

The co-ordinating role of the council

- 5.5.22 The review group felt that the complexity within the apprenticeship 'system' had created some tensions between providers of post-16 support and the council. The number of providers in the borough offering pre-apprenticeship support; the different apprenticeship opportunities available through different providers; and the funding available to provide pre-apprenticeship support and in-apprenticeship training all helped to create an air of competition within the borough.
- 5.5.23 There is also a misconception by some partners of the council's role in the apprenticeship agenda. The previous target-driven approach to delivering job outputs has contributed to the perception that the Skillsmatch service is in competition with other providers of post-16 support in the borough. However, they now achieve their aims by supporting any local young people into work. Any vacancies for jobs 'hosted' by Skillsmatch, including apprenticeships or work experience, are advertised to a range of providers, including Jobcentre Plus, training providers funded by the council, registered social landlords and Towerskills.
- 5.5.24 The review group also found that, despite problems in the system, partners recognised the importance of working in a coordinated way to support young people into apprenticeship opportunities. A number of working groups have been established to bring together key partners to support this activity. These include the Apprenticeship Task Group, the Young People Preparing for Adulthood Task Group, and the Employment and Enterprise Task Group. However, these groups are in the early stages of development and work undertaken by these groups has not yet been fully embedded. The review group felt that because the issue of tackling youth unemployment was split over two service areas (Education, Social Care & Wellbeing, and Development & Renewal) and several working groups, this caused a fragmented approach to the issue. The review group felt that there should be an overarching group which had sole responsibility for youth unemployment.
- 5.5.25 Progress has been made by the council to develop its role as a strategic facilitator of apprenticeship opportunities, and the review group are keen that this be developed further. This has already begun through a number of activities:
- Liaising with businesses to promote apprenticeships.
 - Identifying young people who could benefit from being on an apprenticeship programme.
 - Ensuring support is in place for apprentices.
 - Tracking and monitoring apprentices and report progress to the Apprenticeship Task Group.
- 5.5.26 In its work liaising with training providers, the economic development service have found that there is still some reluctance to share information on apprenticeship opportunities as well as details of young people who have been placed or are receiving pre-apprenticeship support. Construction was highlighted as one area where there are tensions because of perceived competition. The review group heard about Operation Janus, a borough-wide approach to capitalising on construction as a growth industry, led by Towerskills. It brings together the economic development service, Jobcentre

Plus and construction employers. They are assessing the feasibility of creating a construction academy for local young people to enable them to upskill and access opportunities within the construction industry. The review group also heard about the construction desk managed by Skillsmatch which deals directly with a number of smaller contractors and in collaboration with partners for large projects, to broker job and apprenticeships opportunities for residents, providing training specific to the construction industry to facilitate access. The Skillsmatch construction desk is in the process of obtaining the National Skills Academy for Construction accreditation award. Towerskills indicated that they felt that the construction desk at Skillsmatch was undermining the Operation Janus partnership working described above.

- 5.5.27 The review group believe the council should prioritise providing clarity to its partners on its role as a coordinator and emphasise that the council encourages partnership working, cross-referral, advocating for opportunities, and supports the sharing of resources. This should be done in conjunction with a drive to push forward the Apprenticeship Task Group and the establishment of the Employment and Enterprise Task Group in order to further build relationships with all providers and maximise outcomes for young people.

Recommendation 8: Clarify the role of the council in the apprenticeship agenda and build on relationships with providers through the employment and enterprise task group.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Apprenticeships have been developed by the Coalition Government as a key route into employment for young people. The economy in Tower Hamlets' economic hubs such as Canary Wharf and the City Fringe has shown resilience over the recession period compared to many other areas in London. The council and its partners are well placed to play a key role in supporting young people to take advantage of these opportunities on their doorstep and elsewhere across London.
- 6.2 The way the apprenticeship framework has been established has not helped to make this route into employment either clear or attractive. Many schools, parents and young people themselves have misconceptions about apprenticeships. The council has a role to play in providing clear and accessible information which is widely available and publicised.
- 6.3 There is a need for businesses in the borough to further support young people's career choices and employability by increasing the opportunities for pupils and school leavers to gain access to mentors and by improving their work experience offer.
- 6.4 Apprenticeships have been presented as a solution to businesses concerns about skills shortages, both relating to industry qualifications and soft employability skills. The council and other key providers of post-16 support have been working to address the lack of employability skills that some young people possess, by offering pre-apprenticeship training. They are also providing some in-work support in order to help young people sustain their apprenticeship. The council should support this good work by establishing itself as a facilitator and coordinator of apprenticeships, spreading good

practice and coordinating the supply and demand in order to maximise benefits for the borough's young people.

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R1. Increase access to independent information advice and guidance for young people.			
<p>Independent information advice and guidance is recognised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise Aspirations; • Raise attainment and achievement and reduce dropout rates; leading to • Reduced Unemployment, reduced poverty and improved economy <p>The scrutiny committee report recognises the benefits reported by young people and schools that have arisen from the current Mayors initiative to provide 1-2-1 individual Careers Guidance interviews with an action plan for all year 11 students. The funding for this current project has come to an end. Moving forward schools are provided with a number of free days independent impartial Careers information advice and guidance support focused on young people with special needs and those most 'at risk of becoming NEET'. A costed service menu has been developed so that educational institutions can buy in additional days.</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets Careers Service to provide independent impartial Careers information advice and guidance.</p>	<p>Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement</p>	<p>September 2013 (2013/14 academic year)</p>
	<p>Ensure that are links to external advisory services and independent information services are available on the re-designed web pages. Ensure that those services have access, via links, to information from the council on apprenticeships, skills and jobs.</p>	<p>Andy Scott, Interim Head of Service, Economic Development</p>	<p>July 2013 and ongoing</p>
	<p>Partnership agreements for delivery in schools and college outlining agreed delivery from institution and the Careers service.</p>	<p>Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement</p>	<p>September 2013 (2013/14 academic year)</p>

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R2. Support the development of a universal mentoring scheme			
Mentoring has been recognised as a useful way to help young people overcome barriers to progression, to develop their career management and employability skills and provide support to implement their Careers Guidance action plan	Tower Hamlets Careers Service will bid to access ESF funding to provide mentoring support for young people 'at risk of NEET ' and those young people already NEET – Tower Hamlets Careers Service	Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement	July 2013 and ongoing
	Commission voluntary sector to provide mentoring support as part of the 'youth offer – Getting Young People working project'	Abzal Ali Targeted Support Manager - Youth Service Youth & Community Learning	September 2013 and ongoing
	Utilise Business mentors to support young people in developing their employability skills.	Education Business Partnership	March 2013 and ongoing

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R3. Work with the Education Business Partnership and businesses to improve the work experience offer for young people at school			
<p>Work experience is recognised as a practical 'hands on' way for young people to develop their employability skills. Previous projects such as the NEET work experience project have proved successful in helping young people develop their skills and obtain sustained employment.</p>	<p>Work with the EBP to promote the benefits of work experience to schools</p>	<p>Education Business Partnership & School Apprenticeship liaison officer, Youth & Community Learning</p>	<p>July 2013 and ongoing</p>
	<p>Link work experience to transition into Apprenticeships/ Traineeships building on the Carillion pilot project.</p>	<p>Education Business Partnership & School Apprenticeship liaison officer, Secondary Learning & Achievement Team</p>	<p>July 2013 and ongoing</p>
	<p>To exploit relationships with local businesses from work on the council's enterprise strategy to maximise the work experience opportunities for local young people. This must however take a realistic view of the current economic climate and their commercial priorities.</p>	<p>Andy Scott, Interim Service Head Economic Development</p>	<p>March 2013 and ongoing</p>

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R4. Increase employment opportunities of young people through introductory work experience			
This work has already begun through the activities within the Employment Strategy.	Commitments from employers to provide work experience opportunities will be introduced more comprehensively into the council’s planning and procurement processes (following legal advice) to ensure an increase in available opportunity for workless residents including young people.	Andy Scott, Interim Head of Service, Economic Development	August 2013 and ongoing
	Review contracts and liaise with employers of existing contracts to prepare them for offering opportunities when their contracts are renewed. Initial interventions will start from September 2013.	Andy Scott, Interim Head of Service, Economic Development	September 2013 and ongoing

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R5. Improve online information about apprenticeships and other employment opportunities.			
As part of the employment strategy it is recognised that fast easy access to current opportunities is essential. This work has already begun through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy.	Redesign of the Council's web pages to include a more accessible set of information around employment, skills and training, which will include comprehensive information on apprenticeships for different audiences including pupils, teachers, parents, businesses, young people and training organisations.	Andy Scott, Interim Service Head Economic Development Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement	July / August 2013 and ongoing
	Leaflets (on line and paper) on applying for and securing positions, the range of educational and training opportunities available and employment rights. There will be links available to the range of local support available from Skillsmatch, the Careers Service and youth service as well as links to national organisations that can support.	Andy Scott, Interim Service Head Economic Development Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement	August 2013 and ongoing
	Develop an Apprenticeship bulletin which to go on schools intranet to inform young people, their parents / careers and teaching staff of the opportunities and support available. A url link will be sent by text/ e-mail to young people on the NEET register to highlight current opportunities to them.	Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement	July 2013 and ongoing

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
R6. Raise awareness and improve the perception of apprenticeships in schools.			
<p>It is recognised that whilst there are a range of exciting opportunities being developed (including Higher Level Apprenticeships) apprenticeships are not always seen by all teaching staff, young people and their parents/ carers to be on a par with academic options and a good progression route for many young people. With the increase in tuition fees for Higher education it is important that all groups are aware of the apprenticeship route as another way in to higher learning and earning.</p> <p>This work has already begun through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy.</p>	<p>Work across the Apprenticeship Task Group to ensure access to information is maximised and that the profile and benefits of apprenticeships are promoted within the schools, particularly amongst education staff.</p> <p>Carry out a number of briefing / INSET sessions for school staff to raise their awareness of the Apprenticeship route and the opportunities available. There will also be inputs for parents/carers at parents evenings and sessions directly working with young people setting out the routes available, opportunities and how to secure these.</p>	<p>Di Warne, Service Head Learning and Achievement</p> <p>Schools Apprenticeship Liaison Officer, Youth & Community Learning Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement</p>	<p>March 2013 and ongoing</p> <p>September 2013 and ongoing</p>

2013/02/09

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
---------	--------	----------------	------

R7. Support businesses to improve the quality of the opportunities they offer so they can become accredited apprenticeships.

The work has already begun to support businesses to improve the quality of the work placement opportunities they offer and that they develop more accredited apprenticeship opportunities. This is being done through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy.	Working across the Apprenticeship Task Group partners with particular influence from the National Apprenticeship Service as the government agency for this work, the apprenticeship agenda will be presented to Tower Hamlets businesses to engage with the agenda and promote the use of accredited apprenticeship opportunities.	Andy Scott Interim Service Head, Economic Development	March 2013 and ongoing
	To identify training route-ways for growth sectors in the borough and promote apprenticeships as part of the offer for those sectors.	Andy Scott Interim Service Head, Economic Development	March 2013 and ongoing

R8. Clarify the role of the council in the apprenticeship agenda and build on relationships with providers through the employment and enterprise task group.

The local authority has a role in developing the number of Apprenticeships available working closely with businesses and the National Apprenticeship service; and ensuring the local community is aware of the opportunities available, progression routes to access these and support to secure Apprenticeships and long term work.	Embed the role of the council's Economic Development team as the facilitator of the Apprenticeship Task Group by working alongside the National Apprenticeship Service and other partners including Education Business Partnership and schools.	Andy Scott Interim Service Head, Economic Development	March 2013 and ongoing
--	---	---	------------------------

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN – Removing Barriers to Youth Employment

Comment	Action	Responsibility	Date
<p>This work has already begun through activities within the Apprenticeship Task Group as part of the wider Employment Strategy.</p>	<p>Develop an Apprenticeship Action plan setting out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How young people are prepared for Apprenticeships 2. How young people are made aware of the opportunities available and supported to secure these 3. How we will increase the number of Apprenticeships available 4. How developments and actions will be monitored to measure success and how this links to the employment strategy <p>The plan will be monitored on a bi-monthly basis through the Apprenticeship Task Group.</p>	<p>Andy Scott, Interim Service Head Economic Development</p> <p>Steve Grocott Service Manager Careers, Learning & Achievement</p>	<p>July 2013 and ongoing</p>
	<p>The apprenticeship agenda as a whole is a key element of work activity within the youth employment objective of the Employment Strategy Action Plan. The Economic Taskforce Operational Group will be responsible for carrying out these activities. The inaugural meeting for this group is scheduled for September 2013.</p>	<p>Andy Scott, Interim Service Head Economic Development</p>	<p>September 2013 and ongoing</p>

Agenda Item 6.7

Committee: Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date: 4 th March 2014	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No.
Report of: Service Head, Democratic Services Originating Officer(s): Antonella Burgio, Committee Officer, Democratic Services		Title: Log of Actions Requested at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings During the Municipal Year 2013-14 (2) Wards: All	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report provides a summary of actions requested by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) arising from the reports and matters considered by the Committee in the current municipal year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the OSC note the contents of the attached log of actions that have been requested
- 2.2 That the OSC note progress made on actions that remain outstanding and the completion of the actions as indicated in the attached log.

3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 established arrangements for an Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the majority of local councils in England and Wales. It gave powers to Overview and Scrutiny Committees to hold the Executive to account and to carry out its own investigations and reviews into matters for which the Council is responsible. To perform this role Overview and Scrutiny Committees receive reports and presentations of relevant information in accordance with Local Government Access to Information Rules.
- 3.2 At its meetings, when considering matters placed before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members will from time to time request additional information or actions from officers. to assist with their deliberations on the matters that are being examined.
- 3.2 This report provides an update on all such requests made by the Committee and information by which Members may also monitor the progress of actions that have yet to be completed.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

5.1 The requests for additional material and officer actions assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discharge fully its statutory and other functions. This report updates progress in respect of all requests made by the Committee. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

6. APPENDICES

- Appendix - Actions Outstanding List as at 4 March 2014

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report**

Brief description of "background papers"	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
---	--

None

Actions arising from OSC

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
4 June 2013			
Item 8.3	<i>Use of RIPA</i> Report outcome of independent inspection on use of RIPA powers to OSC	David Galpin (Legal)	Completed– Reported to OSC on 5 November 2013”
Item 8.4	<i>OSC Work programme</i> Clerk to canvass member availability for development session	Angus Taylor (DS) Daisy Beserve (CSE)	Completed – Development Session, July 2013
2 July 2013			
Item 6.1	<i>Removing Barriers to Youth Employment</i> SH Corporate Strategy, & Equality (SHCSE) to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet	Louise Russell/ Daisy Beserve/Vicky Allen (CSE)	Completed 31 July 2013 (submitted to Cabinet)
Item 6.2	<i>Improving Post 16 Educational Attainment</i> SHCSE to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet	Louise Russell/ Daisy Beserve/Vicky Allen (CSE)	Completed 31 July 2013 (submitted to Cabinet)
Item 6.3	<i>Mental Health & Housing Challenge Session Report</i> SHCSE to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet	Louise Russell/ Daisy Beserve/Vicky Allen (CSE)	Completed 31 July 2013 (submitted to Cabinet)

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 6.4	<p>Strategic Performance Corporate Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring 2012/13– Draft Outturn</p> <p>Numerical data on JSA claimant Rate and proportion in child poverty / poverty indicators to be circ to OSC members</p>	Louise Russell (CSE)	Status TBD
	Explanation of variance in communications budget (2012-13) to be circulated to OSC in writing	Louise Russell (CSE)	Completed - email 12 July (CDR)
	Cllr A Choudhury to provide a timescale and action plan on the development and implementation of Mayors Employment Enterprise Board	Cllr A Choudhury / Andy Scott (D&R) / Daniel Fordham	Pending – OSC written to 18 th July to advise that the establishment of the Board had been postponed until after April 2014
Item 6.5	<p>OSC Work programme</p> <p>Finalise work programme and present to OSC meeting on 23 July 2013</p>	Daisy Beserve (CSE)	Completed 23 July 2013 (OSC meeting)
23 July 2013			
Item 3	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend September Scrutiny Spotlight</p>	Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed 10 September 2013 (OSC meeting)
	Information pertaining to Communications budget (2/7 OSC) to be circ to Cllr Snowdon	Chris Holme (Res) / Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed – email 29 July (AT)

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 6.1	<p>Call-in Mayors Decision 034 “Community Chest and Events Fund 2012-14” Call-in referral to Mayor</p> <p>Written details of organisations qualifying for grant under clause “projects worth supporting in view of the perceived community benefits”</p>	<p>Alan Ingram/ Angus Taylor (DS)</p> <p>Dave Clark (D&R)/ Martin Ebbs (D&R)/ Alan Ingram (DS)</p>	<p>Completed 29 July (AT)</p> <p>Completed – emailed to Cllr Saunders 29 July (AT)</p>
Item 7.1	<p>Cumulative Impact Policy –Brick Lane Advice/comments of OSC on the policy be presented at Cabinet on 31 July 2013</p>	Cllr Uz-Zaman/ Alan Ingram (DS)	Completed 31 July 2013
Item 7.2	<p>OSC Work Programme Approved and continually updated</p>	Mark Cairns (CSE)/ Angus Taylor(DS)	Ongoing – copy of work programme held by Dem Svs
10 September 2013			
Item 3	<p>Matters Arising Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend October Scrutiny Spotlight</p> <p>Information on Mayor’s diary commitments on future OSC dates to be requested</p>	<p>Angus Taylor (DS)</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed – written request made</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Items 5. and 8.1	<p>Community Safety Spotlight / Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-16 Information on funding of Police Officers in the Borough (MP & Council)</p> <p>Ref “Dealer a Day” initiative – performance breakdown of arrests, convictions and re-offending requested</p> <p>Sky Line planning application – written answer to be provided</p> <p>Advice/comments of OSC on Community Safety Plan to be presented to Mayor at Cabinet on 11 September 2013</p>	<p>Andy Bamber (SHSC)</p> <p>Andy Bamber (SHSC)</p> <p>Andy Bamber (SHSC)</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)</p>	<p>Status TBD</p> <p>Status TBD</p> <p>Status TBD</p> <p>Completed 11 September 2013</p>
Item 8.2	<p>Licensing Policy Review Advice/comments of OSC on the Statement of Licensing Policy and ‘No Casino’ resolution to be presented to Mayor at Cabinet on 11 September 2013</p>	<p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)</p>	<p>Completed 11 September 2013</p>
Item 8.3	<p>Strategic Performance, Corporate Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 2013/14 Breakdown of all Council sale of assets, and capital receipts accruing to be to be provided for reporting period and</p>	<p>Paul Thorogood (Resources)</p>	<p>Completed – emailed 14 October (AT)</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	Same breakdown to be reported in future quarterly reports	Paul Thorogood (Resources)	Completed / ongoing
Item 11	AOB Chair requested microphones fit for purpose to be provided for the meeting	Jean Waterson (FM.)	Completed (provided at subsequent OSCs)
1 October 2013			
Item 1	Apologies Non delivery of refreshment	Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed – FM apologies circulated 7 October (AT)
Item 3	Matters Arising Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend November Scrutiny Spotlight Mayor’s diary sheets on future OSC dates to be requested	Angus Taylor (DS) Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed 5 November 2013 Completed – requested in writing
Item 5	Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Spotlight H&WB agenda to be supplied to Chair of HSP Details of what consideration Mayor has given to using assets for early years	CSE - Health Cllr Asad / Robert McCulloch-Graham	Completed – Cllr Saunders added to H&WBB distrib. Status - response from ESCW awaited shortly

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	provision rather than sale to generate income Powerpoint on Early years provision to be circulated to OSC members	(CDESCW) - Sarah Steer Ann Canning (ESCWB) / Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed – email 9 October (AT)
Item 8.1	<i>Electoral Matters – Update</i> Local protocol language to be reviewed Further comprehensive report req, on arrangements to ensure the integrity of electoral registration and the 2014 elections	John Williams (DS) Louise Stamp / John Williams (DS)	Completed – draft protocol revised and presented to Jan 2014 meeting Completed - Electoral Registration and 2014 Election Arrangements report presented at OSC January 2014
Item 10	<i>Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Papers</i> CIL – Revised draft charging schedule. Briefing note req to all OSC ref the nature of CIL and the anticipated reduction of S106 funds	Owen Whalley (Planning & Bld Ctrl)	Completed – email 16 October (AT)
Item 11	<i>AOB</i> Referrals from Council: 1. Watts Grove – item added to OSC workprogramme for 5 th November meeting 2. Mayors Car – Item added to OSC workprogramme for 5 th November meeting	Angus Taylor (DS) Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed - initial consideration at 5 November OSC Completed - initial consideration deferred by Chair to 3 December OSC

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	Fairness Commission – OSC consideration deferred to after Mayor’s decision on Commission’s recommendations	Louise Russell (CSE) - Sarah Barr	Cabinet report to be prepared for a date TBD
5 November 2013			
Item 3	<p><i>Matters Arising</i> Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend December Scrutiny Spotlight</p> <p>FOI request for Mayor’s diary sheets on future OSC dates</p>	<p>Angus Taylor</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)</p>	<p>Completed 3 December 2013</p> <p>Response to FOI finalised.</p>
Item 5.1	<p><i>Call-In Community Chest and Events Fund Round 3</i> Call-in referral to Mayor</p> <p>Maps indicating location of successful funding applications to be provided to OSC</p> <p>Officer advice/recommendations where Mayoral decision to award grant opposed advice to be provided to OSC. Also Mayor to provide rationale in such cases</p> <p>Report to OSC on overall impact of the Community Chest and Community Events Grants programme including related criteria and monitoring mechanisms</p>	<p>Angus Taylor (DS)</p> <p>Dave Clark (D&R)</p> <p>Dave Clark (D&R)</p> <p>Dave Clark (D&R)</p>	<p>Completed 12 November 2013</p> <p>Completed and reported to meeting on 4 February 2014</p> <p>Status TBD</p> <p>Completed and reported to meeting on 4 February 2014</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 6	<p><i>Scrutiny Spotlight Development & Renewal</i></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead site visit to call centre to be facilitated</p> <p>Further report to OSC requested on the TV adverts promoting the DH programme and related issues raised by OSC</p>	<p>Rabina Khan / Jackie Odunoye (D&R)</p> <p>Jackie Odunoye/ Alison Thomas (D&R)</p>	<p>Status TBD</p> <p>Response received Feb 2014 – no TV adverts commissioned by THH.</p>
Item 8.1	<p><i>Reference from Council: Watts Grove Depot Project (unrestricted)</i></p> <p>Briefing Note to be circulated to all OSC members clarifying the rationale for the 35 lease element of the proposal and right to buy implications</p> <p>Ward Members and Cabinet Member Cllr Rabina Khan to undertake ward visit at Bromley by Bow to convey to constituents the rationale for scrapping the Watts Grove Depot scheme</p>	<p>Ann Sutcliffe (D&R)</p> <p>Cllr Rabina Khan</p>	<p>3 December OSC – oral response given in Officer introduction</p> <p>Completed by Cllr Rabina Khan – November 2013</p>
Item 8.2	<p><i>Covert investigation under RIPA</i></p> <p>Information on MP RIPA activity to requested</p>	<p>David Galpin (Legal)</p>	<p>Status TBD</p>
Item 8.3	<p><i>Complaints and Information Governance Annual Report</i></p> <p>Statistical significance of stage 1 complaints on bulk waste collection to be re-examined</p>	<p>David Galpin (Legal) / Ruth Dowden</p>	<p>Completed 14 February – response emailed to OSC members</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 9	Verbal Updates from Scrutiny Leads Cllr Eaton to provide Chair with outline of proposed OSC budget scrutiny process	Cllr Eaton/Fran Jones (CSE)	Completed - incorporated into budget presentation at 3 December OSC
Item 11	AOB – Executive Mayor’s Car Matter to be deferred to December or January OSC meeting	Angus Taylor (DS)	Initial consideration at 3 December OSC. Item deferred to OSC meeting 20 January 2014
Item 15.1	Reference from Council: Watts Grove Depot Project (Exempt) Further consideration deferred to December OSC meeting Unrestricted/exempt content of report to be reviewed and transparency for December OSC Arrangements to access papers in advance December OSC to be agreed by Legal Svs/ Chair Additional information requested	Ann Sutcliffe (D&R) / Angus Taylor (DS) David Galpin (Legal) Cllr Uz-Zaman / David Galpin (Legal) Dem Svs to advise	Completed – consideration at 3 December OSC Completed – 3 December OSC Completed – 3 December OSC OSC has seen all the information that could be provided.
3 December 2013			
Item 1	Apologies Cabinet Members to be requested to diarise all future OSC’s as a formal invitation form OSC to attend	Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)	Status – on going Pending

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 3	<p><i>Matters Arising</i> Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend January Scrutiny Spotlight</p> <p>Response to FOI request for Mayor's diary sheets on future OSC dates to be pursued</p>	<p>Angus Taylor</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS)</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Response completed.</p>
Item 7.1	<p><i>Reference from Council: Watts Grove Depot Project (unrestricted)</i> OSC Chair to prepare a draft to Council for agreement by OSC including recommendations</p>	<p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Angus Taylor (DS) / Mark Cairns (CSE)</p>	<p>Completed – item on January OSC agenda</p>
Item 7.2	<p><i>Reference from Council: Executive Mayor's Car</i> Original options appraisal to be circulated to OSC members</p> <p>Confirmation of whether Mayor' car is fitted with tracking tech and if so information to be provided to OSC</p> <p>Diary sheets of Mayoral driver to be provided OSC</p> <p>Details of Mayors past diary commitments to be provided</p>	<p>Paul Thorogood / Chris Holme (Resources)</p> <p>Paul Thorogood / Chris Holme (Resources)</p> <p>Paul Thorogood / Chris Holme (Resources)</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / (DS)</p>	<p>Info tabled at OSC meeting 7 January 2014</p> <p>Info provided January 2014 – the car is not fitted with a tracking device</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Pursued with Dem Svs January 2014 – matter referred back to OSC Chair.</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	Copy of any policy documents giving details of authorised usage of Mayors Car	Paul Thorogood / Chris Holme	“Policy for Driving at Work “ tabled at OSC 7 January 2014
Item 7.3	Budget Update Budget report to January OSC to include a table of savings and identify those not met	Chris Holme (resources)	Completed
Item 10	AOB Electoral Registration and Arrangements: Report requested at October OSC – to be placed on January OSC agenda Deferred and Outstanding Matters Report To be included as standing item in future agenda	John Williams / Angus Taylor (DS) Angus Taylor (DS)	Completed - Agenda item on January OSC agenda Officer comments being sought on action status – to be submitted Feb OSC
7th January 2014			
Item 3	Matters Arising Mayor Rahman to be invited to attend February Scrutiny Spotlight Response to FOI request for Mayor’s diary sheets on future OSC dates to be pursued	John Williams/ Matthew Mannion Cllr Uz-Zaman / Louise Fleming (DS)	Completed letter sent January (DS) Completed - FOI Response sent January.
Item 5.1	Call-in Community Chest Additional information had previously been requested, and was requested again from officers on	Dave Clark (D&R)	Info to be provided by D&R 20 January 2014 Following are agreed:

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information previously requested on the Third Sector organisations which had contacted the Council and had been advised that there was no funding available. ○ A Map of funding within the Borough ○ Criteria for grant assessment ○ Officer recommendations on grants received. ○ All remaining minutes and reports of Grants Board meetings since the MSG round was concluded which had not been previously circulated to Members of the Committee ○ Clarification of the purdah rules in relation to Council funded events ○ A summary of the outputs of all Council grants for the last two years <p>There would be a report on the general issue of Grants to the next meeting of the Committee.</p>	John Williams (DS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • format of map • summary of outputs schedule • structure of report <p>Completed – formed part of report to OSC 4 February 2014</p> <p>Completed – circulated by email 13 January and hard copies sent to Members 5 February 2014</p> <p>Completed – information circulated January 2014. Completed – formed part of report to OSC 4 February 2014</p> <p>Completed – Item published in February OSC agenda.</p>
Item 6	<p><i>Scrutiny Spotlight - Mayor's Priorities</i></p> <p>Cllr Snowdon requested further information from Head of Legal Svcs than given at the meeting regarding requirement of attendance by the Mayor and Cabinet members at O&S when requested by the Committee.</p>	David Galpin (Legal)	Pending

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 7.1	<p>Mayor's Car The report be deferred to the next OSC meeting on 20th January 2014</p> <p>Clarification from Legal officers on the provision in the Council's Constitution for enforcing attendance by the Mayor and Cabinet members at O&S when requested by the committee</p>	<p>Chris Holme (Resources) / Louise Fleming (DS)</p> <p>David Galpin (Legal) / Graham White</p>	<p>Completed - Item added to OSC agenda 20 January 2014</p> <p>Pending</p>
Item 7.2	<p>Watts Grove A report be included in the agenda for the next OSC meeting on 20th January 2014, including those comments made by OSC.</p> <p>Legal advice be sought on whether a draft report could also be included in the agenda papers for the next meeting of the Council on 22nd January 2014</p>	<p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / David Galpin (Legal) / Mark Cairns (CSE)</p>	<p>Item added to OSC agenda 20 January 2014</p> <p>The draft report to OSC on 20 January has been reported up to the Council meeting on 22 January. Any changes coming out of the 20 January meeting will also be reported up.</p>
Item 7.3	<p>Elections 2014 Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications strategy - the Council should ensure the message gets out to all media channels, if necessary engaging a bilingual officer to liaise with all local radio and tv channels, that residents should not allow any fraudulent activities to take 	<p>John Williams (DS) / Louise Stamp</p>	<p>Pending</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	<p>places in their properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that a script be written for all parties to use, and possibly to record a message on video to be shown on all possible communication channels. • Officers should liaise with Members if necessary to help them access local media channels. • Officers should keep the Chair updated on progress and the detailed information would be reviewed in due course. 		
20th January 2014			
Item 5.1	<p>Mayor's Car Attempts will continue to secure information to determine nature and frequency of events attended by the Executive Mayor/ Executive's Mayor's Car.</p> <p>Chair of OSC has agreed to prepare a report back to Council. He will circulate this to OSC Members outside of the meeting and it will come back to OSC in March for approval before submission to March Council.</p>	<p>Chris Holme (Resources)/Graham White (Legal Services)</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Mark Cairns (CSE)</p>	<p>Pending – Fol request submitted on behalf of the Chair on 5 February</p> <p>Pending – report to March Council</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
Item 5.2	<p>Watts Grove</p> <p>Report to be presented to Council on 22 January 2014</p>	Matthew Mannion (DS)	Completed – report presented to Council 22 January 2014
Item 5.3	<p>Budget</p> <p>OSC’s deliberations to be submitted to the Mayor for consideration by Noon on Monday 27 January</p> <p>Third Party Payments – Chris Holme agreed to provide a breakdown of the third party payments that set out why they had increased (for example – showing those relating to public health budgets)</p> <p>Personalised Homecare services – Kate Bingham to provide members with more detail on the current situation in relation to progress on personalised home care and the number of directly employed staff.</p> <p>Asset Management – The Chair requested full details on funds raised from recent asset sales and on what the funds had been allocated to.</p> <p>Free school meals – the Committee requested the following information:</p>	<p>Matthew Mannion (DS)</p> <p>Chris Holme (Res)</p> <p>Kate Bingham (ESCW)</p> <p>Ann Sutcliffe (D&R)</p> <p>Kate Bingham (ESCW)</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed – emailed 4 February and sent in hard copy 5 February</p> <p>Completed – as above</p> <p>Completed – as above</p> <p>Completed – as above</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of children (years: reception to year 2) currently receiving free school meals (and how many were Statutory recipients) • The number of pupils (years: 3 and upwards) currently receiving Statutory Free School Meals. • The additional number of pupils (years 3 and upwards) who would receive the meals if lunches were made free for all primary age children. • The core cost of providing free school meals at present (total and per child), and the cost of providing free school meals to all primary age children (total and per child). • The existing administrative cost/impact and the likely increase (if any) in the administrative burden, to the council and schools, should the scheme be extended to all primary school pupils. 		
	<p>University Grants - The Committee asked for officers to ensure that University Grants were awarded/paid by 10 February or held over until June/July 2014.</p>	<p>Kate Bingham (ESCW)</p>	<p>Completed - as above</p>
	<p>The Committee also asked for details on drop-out rates for those with awards against similar previous cohorts and also for details</p>	<p>Kate Bingham (ESCW)</p>	<p>Completed – as above</p>

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	<p>on how the grants were paid (one-off, split payment etc).</p> <p>Pre-election guidance – officers were asked to confirm that the pre-election guidance had been circulated to all officers.</p> <p>Officers to provide commentary on the Council's use of reserves, monitoring of existing savings requirements and how they were planning to deal with managing the significant savings that would be required in the next few years.</p>	<p>John S Williams (DS)</p> <p>Chris Holme (Res)</p>	<p>Completed – circulated to officers 12/2 and to be published on TH Net front page</p> <p>Completed – as above</p>
4 February 2014			
Item 3	<p><i>Unrestricted Minutes</i></p> <p>Amend the minutes of the last meeting to record that Councillor Amy Whitelock-Gibbs had submitted her apologies prior to the meeting.</p>	Louise Fleming (DS)	Completed 5 February 2014
Item 6.1	<p><i>Project Information Report – Community Chest and Community Events</i></p> <p>Hard copies of additional information circulated by email following the meeting on 7 January to be sent to Members</p>	Louise Fleming (DS)	Completed – Sent 5 February 2014

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	A list of future community events will be sent to Members when they are known.	Dave Clark (D&R)	Pending
	The letter submitted by Mulberry School in relation to the aims of its community event to be circulated to Members and a breakdown of the expenditure.	Dave Clark / Everett Haughton (D&R)	Pending
	The minutes of the relevant meeting to be checked to confirm whether the CVS expressed a view on the winding down of the Community Chest fund.	Dave Clark (D&R) / Cllr Alibor Choudhury (Resources)	Pending
	A letter to be written to the CVS asking for their view on the winding down of the Community Chest fund	Mark Cairns (CSE) / Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman (Chair)	Pending
Item 6.2	<i>Log of Actions Requested at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings</i>		
	Contact relevant officers to remind them of their outstanding actions.	Mark Cairns (CSE) / Louise Fleming (DS)	Completed 7 February 2014
	Update Action Log with actions relating to the Elections 2014 from the OSC meeting on 7 January 2014	Louise Fleming	Completed 5 February 2014
	Update Action Log with actions completed	Louise Fleming	Completed

Meeting Date and Agenda Item No	Report Title and Action	Responsible Officer/Member	Status Completed (date) or Pending
	since the publication of the agenda		
Item 8	<p><i>Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Papers</i></p> <p>Chair to raise Members' concerns relating to the lack of financial information contained in the exempt report on the new Civic Centre</p>	Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman	Completed – raised at the meeting of the Cabinet on 5 th February 2014
11 February 2014			
Item 4.1	<p><i>(Budget Amendment)</i></p> <p>Re New Civic Centre – Request that all councillors receive as much information as possible re- proposed contract and alternative options available prior to budget Council meeting</p> <p>Re Additional Police in the Borough Chair to write to Boro Cmdr requesting data on No.s of Police Officers that have been reduced in the Boro</p>	<p>Chris Holme / Antonella Burgio / Matthew Mannion</p> <p>Cllr Uz-Zaman / Antonella Burgio</p>	<p>Pending constitutional advice re: restricted papers</p> <p>Letter pending</p>

This page is intentionally left blank