

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 1 September 2016 at 6.00 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 John Pierce

Vice Chair: Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE Scrutiny Lead for Resources

Councillor Mahbub Alam

Councillor Amina Ali

Councillor Abdul Asad

Scrutiny Lead for Communities, Localities & Culture

Councillor Julia Dockerill

Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services

Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE

Scrutiny Lead for Resources

Councillor Oliur Rahman

Councillor Helal Uddin

Councillor Clare Harrison

Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and Wellbeing

Co-opted Members:

Nozrul Mustafa

(Parent Governor Representative)

Victoria Ekubia

(Roman Catholic Church Representative)

Dr Phillip Rice

(Church of England Representative)

1 Vacancy

(Parent Governor Representative)

1 Vacancy

(Parent Governor Representative)

Deputies:

Councillor Danny Hassell, Councillor Dave Chesterton, Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury, Councillor Peter Golds, Councillor Denise Jones, Councillor Md. Maium Miah and Councillor Andrew Wood

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

Contact for further enquiries:

David Knight, Democratic Services

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

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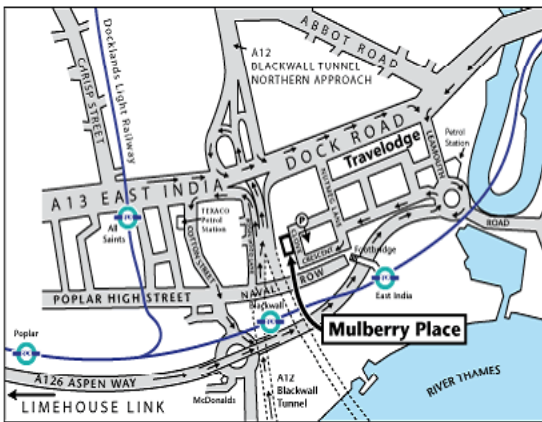
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| SECTION ONE | WARD | PAGE NUMBER(S) |
|---|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | | |
| To receive any apologies for absence. | | |
| 2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST | | 1 - 4 |
| To note any declarations 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 | All Wards | 5 - 14 |
| To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 st July, 2016. | | |
| 4. MAYOR'S INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE DECISION - ACADEMY CONVERSION, ST. PAUL'S WAY TRUST SCHOOL | Mile End | |
| The Council's Constitution provides for the Mayor to take Executive decisions either at meetings of Cabinet or outside of the meetings as Individual Mayoral Decisions. These individual decisions are published on the Council's website but to aid transparency, the Committee at the request of the Chair will receive a verbal update on the Executive Decision in relation to Academy Conversion, St. Paul's Way Trust School. | | |
| 5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN' | | |
| No decisions of the Mayor in Cabinet (26 th July, 2016) in respect of unrestricted reports on the agenda were 'called | | |

in'.

6. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

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

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| 7. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE QUERY AND ACTION LOG 2016/17 | All Wards | 15 - 16 |
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| 8. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS | All Wards | 17 - 20 |
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| 9. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS | All Wards | 21 - 32 |
|--|------------------|----------------|

To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet. With particular reference to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Planning 2017-18 to 2019-20. This report is a noting report that will provide Cabinet with an update on progress to date and plan for developing the MTFS for 2017-18 to 2019-20.

(Time allocated – 30 minutes).

10. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

(Time allocated – 5 minutes each)

11. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT

11 .1 Crime and Disorder Spotlight - Presentation

12. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

| | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| 12 .1 Progress update on Town Centres review | All Wards | 33 - 72 |
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| 12 .2 Integrated Employment Service | All Wards | |
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| 12 .3 Budget Process - Presentation | All Wards | |
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| 12 .4 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17 | All Wards | 73 - 92 |
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| 12 .5 Appointment Hsg Scrutiny Co-Optees | All Wards | 93 - 96 |
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13. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS

WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

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

14. 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

WARD

**PAGE
NUMBER(S)**

15. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil Items

16. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

No decisions of the Mayor in Cabinet (26th July, 2016) in respect of exempt/ confidential reports on the agenda were 'called in'.

17. 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).

**18. 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

Wednesday, 28 September 2016 at 6.00 p.m. 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 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 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 Monitoring Officer following consideration by the Dispensations 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 Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the Register.

Further advice

For further advice please contact:-

- Melanie Clay, Corporate Director, Law, Probity and Governance. Tel 020 7364 4800

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> |

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT TIME NOT SPECIFIED ON THURSDAY, 21 JULY 2016

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

Members Present:

Councillor John Pierce (Chair)
Councillor Abdul Asad

Councillor Julia Dockerill
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Clare Harrison

- Scrutiny Lead for Communities,
Localities & Culture
- Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services
- Scrutiny Lead for Resources
- Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and
Wellbeing

Co-opted Members Present:

Victoria Ekubia

- (Roman Catholic Church
Representative)

Other Councillors Present:

Mayor John Biggs
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs

Apologies:

Nozrul Mustafa
Dr Phillip Rice
Councillor Mahbub Alam
Councillor Amina Ali
Councillor Oliur Rahman

- (Parent Governor Representative)
- (Church of England Representative)

Officers Present:

Dr Somen Banerjee
Claire Belgard

Mark Cairns

Ronke Martins-Taylor

Kevin Miles
Kevin Kewin

- (Director of Public Health)
- Interim Head of Integrated Youth
and Community Services
- (Senior Strategy, Policy and
Performance Officer)
- Youth Services Development
Manager
- (Chief Accountant, Resources)
- (Interim Service Head, Corporate)

Denise Radley
Rachael Sadegh

Graham White

David Knight

- Strategy and Equality)
 - (Director of Adults' Services)
 - (DAAT Manager, Community Safety Service, Communities Localities & Culture)
- (Interim Service Head, Legal Services, Law, Probity and Governance)
- (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Committee receive apologies for absence from Nozrul Mustafa; Dr Phillip Rice; Councillor Mahbub Alam; Councillor Amina Ali and Councillor Oliur Rahman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were received from Members present.

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 7th June, 2016 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

No decisions of the Mayor in Cabinet 14th June, 2016 in respect of unrestricted reports on the agenda had been 'called in'.

5. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil items

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION NOTES 2016 - 2017

The Committee received and noted an update on the outstanding actions.

7. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

The Committee received and noted the published list of forthcoming decisions that provided the Scrutiny Leads with a list of those issues that they needed to

follow up with the Portfolio Lead Members and Directorates. The main points of the discussion on this item maybe summarised as follows:

Approval of the allocation of S106 Funding to projects including Pocket Parks

The Committee noted that approval from Cabinet in the autumn to deliver these projects for the following reasons:

1. They help contribute to the delivery of the Pocket Parks Programme which seeks to deliver improvements to small green spaces by transforming underutilised or neglected areas of land into viable pocket parks for community use;
2. They will improve the outlook of the borough and transform under used green spaces into attractive areas for residents and workers to use; and
3. They will improve the health and wellbeing of residents and workers.

As a result of discussions on this item the Committee asked that they are provided with a progress report on this matter at the earliest opportunity.

8. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

The Committee considered the Cabinet agenda for the 14th June, 2016 and identified the following issues:

Item 5.1 Parking CPZ Policy Review Project

Question: The Committee wanted to know what consultation there has been by the Lead Member and Officers with Ward Members regarding charges in and around our local markets at weekends?

Response received since the meeting: The parking bays across the Borough are chargeable. The formal arrangements of not charging around specific markets lasted only for a short period of time under the experimental order during the economic downturn. It has never been formally converted into a permanent arrangement but has not been returned to charging until the review of all policies that started over two years ago, which identified it as an area of policy needing review. Two Parking Workshops took place with Cabinet members discussing a number of policies including this one. The proposal to formalise this informal temporary arrangement is in line with Transport Strategy in terms of traffic management, air pollution, road safety, supply and demand of spaces, etc. No need for statutory consultation.

Question: What is the justification for charging £4.40 in and around Columbia Road and charging only £3.80 in and around Whitechapel? How has officer and the Executive justified the additional 60pence premium?

Response received since the meeting: As agreed by Cabinet in January 2016, pay & display charges are based on three bands. The proposed pay & display charges in the market areas are therefore based on this banding. The charges become lower from west to east as follows:

- I. Mini-zones A1, A2, A5, A6, C1, C2: £4.40 / hour;
- II. Mini-zones A3, A4, C3, C4: £3.80 / hour; and
- III. Mini-zones B1, B2, B3, B4, D1, D2: £3.40 / hour.

Columbia Road is in mini-zones A1 & A2, therefore attracts the £4.40 charge whereas Whitechapel is in mini-zone A3, so is in the £3.80 band.

Question: What process will now happen to engage elected members; local businesses and business groups in consultation regarding these proposals?

Response: There is no need for statutory consultation. The communication plan is being put in place that will include leaflets and PCN warning notices before the formal arrangement recommences. It is envisaged that the commencement of charging will start approximately 5/6 weeks after the decision.

Question: Has any mapping been done on the pressures regarding “on street parking” and if there has any consideration been given to varying the policy to address the needs of different high streets and shopping centres?

Response received since the meeting: Yes. There was an independent survey done of the whole Borough identifying the pressures, issues and opportunities to align the policies with the Transport Strategy and health and wellbeing agenda. The Policy and CPZ Review report has proposed policies that will attempt to address allocation of parking spaces in the future.

Question: The Committee wanted details on the evidence base regarding the decisions around the conversion of residents parking bays into metered bays?

Response received since the meeting: Bay conversions are performed on the basis of the Development Team receiving a request for review and then investigating the requirements of the area in question and forming proposals that subsequently go to the Lead Member for comment and then to statutory consultation before any bays are changed.

Question: The Committee wanted details of the timescales on the introduction of electric car charging points?

Response received since the meeting: It is subject to engaging the market, getting the best value for money and solution for the Borough. It is envisaged to have it in place within a year.

Item 5.7 Addendums to Character Appraisals and Management Plans

Question: The Committee wanted to know what consultation there has been by officers with ward members regarding the Addendums to Character Appraisals and Management Plans for the 6 conversation areas?

Response received since the meeting: The Addendums were the subject of extensive consultation from the 23rd Nov 2015-18th Jan 2016. Ward members were not individually consulted in the preparation of these Addendums. However consultation events were publicised in East End Life and the Council's website and letters were sent to residents in all the Conservation Areas under review. In addition, the Addendums and the consultation were discussed at 20 January 2016 Council meeting under Petitions, Questions and Motions. As such, ward members would have been aware of the consultation undertaken for the Addendums.

The Addendums are additional informational to supplement the existing Character Appraisal and Management Plans and do not constitute a material change in direction to the original content. The 6 Addendums under consideration provides clarity where roof and rear extensions may be considered appropriate without impacting harmfully on the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas.

9. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

The Committee noted that the Maternity Services Report had highlighted a number of issues including;

- General Practitioner Services;
- Under Five's Provision;
- Low Health Outcomes; and
- Life Chances.

10. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT

10.1 Spotlight on Youth Service

The Committee received and noted a presentation from Claire Belgard, Interim Head of Integrated Youth and Community Service Ronke Martins-Taylor, Youth Services Development Manager regarding the Integrated Youth and Community Service (IYCS). The main points of the discussion maybe summarised as follows:

The Committee noted that:

1. The IYCS delivers targeted youth support, peer education, youth participation projects; and SLAs offering Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); specialist sports, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) and performing arts provision;

2. A management review of delivery at youth centres had identified a need to ensure that youth centres were open according to their published timetable; and to ensure the provision of high quality youth work;
3. A separate full review of the youth service had started in January 2016 to find out what stakeholders including young people wanted from their youth service.
4. Consideration will be given to creative solutions to meet the needs of young people (e.g. empowering local communities to be able to deliver their own provision and involving the third sector in supporting the delivery of such work);
5. An Action Plan has been developed to ensure that the Service is able to deliver what the young people of Tower Hamlets actually want; and
6. Wanted to see a more imaginative delivery of the service (e.g. outreach into the local community) and a detailed dialogue to work with young people to influence the delivery of the IYCS going forward (e.g. how to address postcode allegiances; no-go-areas; gang related crime and their personal hopes; dreams and ambitions).

11. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

11.1 Substance Misuse Strategy

The Committee received a report that outlined the Council's obligations under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to formulate and implement strategies in conjunction with other specified responsible authorities for:

1. Reduction of crime and disorder;
2. Combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
3. Reduction of re-offending.

The main points of the discussion on this report may be summarised as follows:

The Committee noted that:

1. The current Substance Misuse Strategy adopted by LBTH and partners in 2012 had expired in March 2016. Development of a new partnership strategy commenced in August 2015;
2. A draft strategy was agreed by MAB for consultation purposes in January 2016. Consultation has now completed and amendments made to the Strategy (As set out Appendix 1 of the report);
3. The Strategy is a partnership strategy and requires agreement at Full Council.
4. The Substance Misuse Strategy 2016-2019 is part of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy in Tower Hamlets (the Community Safety Plan);
5. The Substance Misuse Strategy 2016-2019 is part of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and the Mayor as the Executive has

responsibility for preparing the draft strategy for submission to the full Council to adopt;

6. The draft Substance Misuse Strategy 2016-2019 and Action Plan will be referred to the strategic partners for approval that the Strategy be adopted by their respective organisations;
7. If any further changes are made to the draft Substance Misuse Strategy 2016-2019 or if, for any reason, any of the strategic partners do not approve the Strategy then a further report must be submitted to Cabinet for the Mayor to consider and make a fresh recommendation to Full Council;
8. There is a need for a co-ordinated response to Substance Misuse with neighbouring boroughs;
9. Apparently a significant percentage in the Borough is undertaken by local residents and this is being addressed through the Gangs Strategy;
10. The new psychoactive substances (NPS), legal highs have been linked to a number of deaths and hospital admissions over the years. These legal highs are psychoactive drugs that contain various chemical ingredients, some of which are illegal while others are not. They produce similar effects to illegal drugs like cocaine, cannabis and ecstasy. They are sold in a variety of forms - powder, pills, liquids, capsules, perforated tabs and smoking mixtures. Accordingly, the Substance Misuse Strategy will need to address every substance that might be misused;
11. There needs to be a thorough and rigorous education programme for both retailers and communities. This would need to be backed up by a comprehensive enforcement programme involving all partner agencies. As well as offering drug users and their families the help and support that they need to address substance misuse;
12. The Borough's Substance Misuse Programme is considered to be an exemplar of best practice; and
13. The profile of substance misuse is changing and the Strategy now being developed through the multi-agency teams reflects the need to address harm reduction.

11.2 The Council's Provisional Financial Outturn 2015/16

The Committee noted this monitoring report which detailed the financial outturn position of the Council at the end of Quarter 4 for 2015/16 compared to budget, and service performance against targets. The report also included projected year-end position for the:

- General Fund Revenue and Housing Revenue Account;
- Capital Programme; and
- Reserve movements.

A summary of the discussion is set out below:

The Committee noted that:

1. Consideration is being given to make the best possible use of the reserves to address to deliver the Council's priorities; and
2. By next year Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will account for only 16% of spending power; by 2019 to 2020 only 5% for Local Government and ultimately the RSG will disappear altogether with the move to 100% business rates retention. Accordingly, the Committee asked for clarity on the future financial position given this reduction in the RSG.

11.3 End of Year Strategic Performance Monitoring Report

The Committee received and noted this monitoring report which detailed the Council's progress in delivering activities within the Strategic Plan and performance for Strategic Measures at year end. The Committee noted the progress in delivering the Strategic Plan at year end and the performance of the Strategic Measures at year end.

11.4 Implementation of Charging Policy for Community Services in Adult Social Care

The Committee noted that a decision was made in February 2016, as part of the Council's budget setting process for 2016/17, to introduce charging for community adult social care services. A summary of the discussions on the proposals for community care charging arrangements is set out below:

The Committee:

1. Noted that a communications plan is now being undertaken to support the assessment of the impact of the policy on service users and identify ways to mitigate any adverse impacts. Consultation commenced on 20th June 2016 and will continue until 19th August 2016. The plan has been developed to enable effective management of communications with all stakeholders. As outlined in Appendix A of the report;
2. Was informed that an information booklet, survey and the letter which has been sent to individual customers who receive one or more of the services which are covered by charging;
3. Was advised that feedback from the consultation will be collated and will form part of the report on charging which will go to cabinet in October prior to implementation of the scheme; and
4. Wanted details on the numbers of people who will have to pay for community care in the future; what help will be provided and how fast adjustments can be made if required to the new system. In response it was noted that work is being undertaken on the implementation of the system with regard to an individual's situation e.g. how to explain; how to reassure and how to ensure people are getting the benefits due to them.

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

Nil items

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The agenda circulated contained no exempt/ confidential business and there was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public to allow for its consideration.

14. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items

15. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

Nil items

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

Nil items

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

Nil items

**Chair, Councillor John Pierce
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE QUERY AND ACTION LOG 2016/17

| Meeting and agenda item | Question or request for action | Response or current status |
|--|--|---|
| 7 th June, 2016 – Public Health Savings – Phase 1 | More information on the outcomes of successful projects, with details on what works and what does not. | Circulated to committee on 29 th July 2016 |
| | Information about the provision of online access, and the evidence base used to inform this. | Circulated to committee on 29 th July 2016 |
| 21 st July 2016 - Forthcoming Decisions | Information on the localities of pocket parks. | Circulated to committee on 15 th August 2016 |
| 21 st July 2016 – Substance Misuse Strategy | Data for Cllr Mukit on drug-related crime in his ward (Weavers). | Circulated to committee on 17 th August 2016 |
| 17 th August 2016 (request outside meeting) | Briefing on Community Trigger, and data on applications and outcomes. | Pending. |

FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| Accommodation Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities 2016-2019 | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and Wellbeing |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: Not before 26/07/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Karen Sugars Notice of decision: 27/03/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open (Unrestricted) | |
| Planning for School Places | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: Not before 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Kate Bingham Notice of decision: 17/05/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Controlled Parking Zone and Parking Policy Review | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: Not before 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Roy Ormsby Notice of decision: 16/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Procurement of Cleaning Contract | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Resources |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 06/09/2106 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Ann Sutcliffe Notice of decision: 15/07/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Approval of the allocation of S106 Funding to projects including Pocket Parks | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for D&R |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: Not before 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Owen Whalley Notice of decision: 30/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |

FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

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| Infrastructure Delivery Framework: Governance Proposals | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for D&R |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: Not before 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Owen Whalley Notice of decision: 30/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Medium Term Financial Strategy Planning 2017-18 to 2019-20 Part One | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Resources |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 04/10/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Zena Cooke Notice of decision: 22/09/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Promoting a shared responsibility and removing barriers to improved recycling in the Borough | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Kevin Kewin Notice of decision: 01/07/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Review of Borough Wide 20 mph limit | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Margaret Cooper Notice of decision: 27/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Social Impact Bond: Pan-London Edge of Care Project | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Children's |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Kate Bingham Notice of decision: 24/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |

FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

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| Best Value Action Plan | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Resources |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 06/09/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Kevin Kewin Notice of decision: 19/06/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Food Law Enforcement Service Plan | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 04/10/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: David Tolley Notice of decision: 10/07/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and Wellbeing |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 01/11/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Denise Radley Notice of decision: 04/07/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Children's |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 01/11/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards); Lead officer: Debbie Jones Notice of decision: 04/07/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Mayor's Transparency Protocol and response to the OSC Transparency Report | Scrutiny Lead Chair of Scrutiny |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 04/10/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Melanie Clay Notice of decision: 03/08/2106 Anticipated restriction: Open | |

FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

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| Medium Term Financial Strategy Planning 2017-18 to 2019-20 Part Two | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Resources |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 04/10/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Zena Cooke Notice of decision: 22/09/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Community Safety Partnership Plan Review | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 01/11/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Will Tuckley Notice of decision: 17/08/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Somali Task Force | Scrutiny Lead Chair of Scrutiny |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 01/11/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Melanie Clay Notice of decision: 22/08/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Academy Conversions – Mulberry School for Girls and Ian Mikardo High School | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for Children's |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 04/10/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Debbie Jones Notice of decision: 22/08/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |
| Commercial Events in Parks | Scrutiny Lead Scrutiny Lead for CLC |
| Decision maker: Cabinet Decision due date: 01/11/2016 Wards affected: (All Wards) Lead officer: Will Tuckley Notice of decision: 22/08/2016 Anticipated restriction: Open | |

Agenda Item 9

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| Cabinet 6 September 2016 |  TOWER HAMLETS |
| Report of: Zena Cooke (Corporate Director of Resources) | Classification: Unrestricted |
| Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017 - 2020 | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Lead Member | Councillor Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources |
| Originating Officer(s) | Neville Murton (Service Head Finance and Procurement) |
| Wards affected | All |
| Key Decision? | No |
| Community Plan Theme | [State Theme] |

Executive Summary

In February 2016 the Council agreed its budget for 2016/17 and set out a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the period to 2020. The MTFS identified that further savings of c£60m were required over that period in order to deliver a balanced budget position in each of the years.

Since that time the Council has been considering its approach to financial planning in the light of a number of issues including the offer of a four year 'guaranteed' financial settlement from the government.

The planning stability offered by that guarantee has been used as a catalyst to extend the financial planning horizon to cover the period 2017 – 2020 and develop revenue proposals aimed at establishing a balanced MTFS. In support of that aspiration the Council has adopted a far more strategic approach to prioritising its resources Outcomes Based Budgeting and more effectively identify savings proposals. The Council has also recognised the need to adopt a similar outcome based approach to its use of Capital resources alongside the development of its revenue budget.

This report updates the Cabinet on the progress to date and sets out the next steps in this process aimed at consulting on and agreeing a balanced budget position across the MTFS period (2017 – 2020) as part of its budget setting process which will conclude in February 2017. As in previous years this will also include proposals relating to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) including rent setting considerations and the Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) strategy.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the Council's Outcomes Based Budgeting approach to prioritising resources and the move to a rolling multi-year Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2017-18 to 2019-2020.
2. Note the issues and actions set out in this report which are informing the development of the Council's MTFS for 2017 – 2020;
3. Note the timescales and next steps for reviewing and consulting on budget proposals;

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1. The Council is under a duty to set a balanced and sustainable budget and maintain adequate reserves such that it can deliver its statutory responsibilities and priorities.
- 1.2. A Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the entirety of the resources available to the Council is considered to be the best way that resource prioritisation and allocation decisions can be considered and agreed in a way that provides a stable and considered approach to service delivery and takes into account relevant risks and uncertainty.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1. Whilst the Council will adopt a number of approaches to the identification of measures aimed at delivering its MTFS there is no alternative other than to set a legal and balanced budget and agree its Council Tax before the statutory deadline.
- 2.2. The Council could continue with the current approach of agreeing proposals on an annual basis but this does not support a strategic approach which allows for proposals to be managed and implemented over a longer period of time leading to evidenced based policy decisions and better overall outcomes.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

3.1. Background

- 3.1.1. The medium term financial planning process is an essential part of the Council's resource allocation and strategic service planning framework. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) integrates strategic and financial planning over a three year period. It translates the Strategic Plan priorities into a financial framework that enables the Mayor and officers to ensure policy initiatives can be delivered within available resources, and can be aligned to priority outcomes.
- 3.1.2. The drivers for the Council's financial strategy are:
 - To set a balanced budget over the life of the MTFS whilst protecting residents from Council Tax increases as far as possible.
 - To fund priorities agreed within the Strategic Plan, ensuring that service and financial planning delivers these priorities.
 - To deliver a programme of planned reviews and savings initiatives designed to keep reductions to service outcomes for residents to a minimum.
 - To maintain and strengthen the Council's financial position so that it has sufficient reserves and balances to address any future risks and unforeseen events without jeopardising key services and delivery of service outcomes for residents.

- Ensuring the Council maximises the impact of its spend to deliver priority outcomes.
- 3.1.3. Since 2011-12 in the face of unprecedented reductions in Government funding and increasing demand on services, the need to make savings has dominated the Council's financial planning process.
- 3.1.4. In February 2016 the Council agreed a balanced budget for 2016-17 and a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that showed a budget gap over the period 2017-2020 of £60m.
- 3.1.5. This report begins to explore the challenges facing the Council in the context of a number of fundamental changes to the financial environment in which Local Authorities operate. In particular it outlines a process that will deliver a balanced budget position over the course of the MTFS period; and gives a commitment to report a more granular analysis by the October Cabinet meeting.

3.2. Strategic Approach

- 3.2.1. The Council has a well-embedded approach to strategic and resource planning. Key priorities are agreed with residents and partners and these are reflected in a set of strategic objectives in the Council's three year Strategic Plan and these underpin the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 3.2.2. The Strategic Plan focuses on two priority outcomes and an enabling objective. These are:

Priority 1- Creating opportunity by supporting aspiration and tackling poverty –
has the following outcomes:

- 1.1 A dynamic local economy, with high levels of growth;
- 1.2 More residents in good quality, well paid jobs;
- 1.3 Young People realising their potential;
- 1.4 More people living healthily and independently for longer;
- 1.5 Reducing inequality and embracing diversity.

Priority 2- Creating and maintaining a vibrant, successful place –
has the following outcomes:

- 2.1 An improved local environment;
- 2.2 Better quality homes for all;
- 2.3 Less crime and anti-social behaviour;
- 2.4 Engaged, resilient and cohesive communities.

Enabling objective-A transformed Council, making best use of resources and with an outward looking culture - has the following outcomes:

- 3.1 Making best use of Council resources;
- 3.2 Support an organisation based on transparency, trust and effective relationships;
- 3.3 Deliver an organisational transformation programme;
- 3.4 Develop an effective workforce strategy;

- 3.5 Nurture an outward looking culture, by asserting our place and relationships in London.

3.2.3. In the past this strategic approach has not been reflected in the Government's annual announcement of financial resources and, in recent times, in year reductions to previously announced funding levels. However, at the time of the 2016-17 Provisional Local Government Funding Settlement an announcement was made offering a 'guaranteed' financial settlement for the four year period 2016-2020.

3.2.4. Whilst the guarantee is limited in its scope and requires the production of an, as yet determined, Efficiency Plan it does provide a platform for longer term financial planning and the Council is proposing to adopt such an approach by seeking to agree budget proposals spanning the whole of the remaining MTFS period (i.e. 2017 – 2020). It is also adopting an Outcome Based Budgeting approach in order to inform its proposals.

3.3. Outcome Based Budgeting

3.3.1. Outcome Based Budgeting (OBB) aims to directly link how resources are allocated through budget mapped to the strategic priorities of the Council. OBB seeks to break down traditional departmental approaches in terms of the assumptions around how budgets should be set and the basis for making savings. The Council's new Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2017-2020 seeks to reflect OBB principles, delivering the Council's priority outcomes as set out in the Strategic Plan, while making savings through planned budget reductions rather than cutting costs on a service by service basis.

3.3.2. Proposals will be identified covering the whole of the MTFS planning period and bridging the total identified funding gap – currently £60m.

3.3.3. This approach allows for a programme of savings to be planned and undertaken over a longer timeframe which should result in proposals that will allow for the development of more detailed future operating models alongside partners and stakeholders. It also allows for the support necessary to deliver the changes successfully to be better matched and planned for; this would include for example programme management arrangements and support and training for staff that may need to operate in new ways in the future.

3.4. Future Outlook for the Council's Finances

3.4.1. Notwithstanding the fact that the Government is proposing a four year funding guarantee, this substantively applies to the relatively small and diminishing amount of Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Since 2013/14 Councils have retained an element of the business rates that they collect (30% for Tower Hamlets). The total retained business rates for 2016-17 is £121m. There are a number of developments relating to the retention of business rate that could, given the significance of business rates in the Borough, have a fundamental effect on the Council's finances.

3.4.2. In particular:

- The revaluation of Business Rates which will take effect from next April and is based on April 2015 business rate values;
- The impact of the above revaluation on the business rate multiplier (in order to maintain a neutral impact overall to valuation changes);
- The impact of the above revaluation on appeals by business ratepayers which, in the early years are often significant and which the Council is now exposed to financial risk on;
- The 'resetting' of the system of top-ups and tariffs that accompanies the Business Rate Retention Scheme and takes into account relative need which was originally proposed to happen in 2020 but could be reviewed as part of the revaluation process; and
- The development of the government's 100% business rate retention scheme which will potentially have wide ranging impacts on other funding sources as the assumption is that a number of existing funding streams will be subsumed into this new source of funding.

3.4.3. In addition to the increasing importance of Business Rates, Council Tax will continue to be an important source of revenue. After several years of Council tax freezes, enabled by a specific Council tax freeze grant, the government withdrew the freeze grant and allowed Councils to increase Council Tax in 2016-17 by up to 4%. 2% of which was to support Adult Social Care pressures and up to a further 2% was for more general purposes as a consequence of the cessation of the freeze grant.

3.4.4. A new measure of Core Spending Power (CSP) was introduced which assumed a number of actions going forward in order to introduce a consistent measure of funding changes over time; key amongst these assumptions was that Councils would take advantage of the ability to increase its Council tax for both elements. The government has therefore assumed in its funding allocations that the Council will continue to increase Council Tax each year. Even taking into account those assumed increases the Tower Hamlets CSP would fall by 3.7% over the period to 2020.

3.4.5. In the October Cabinet report, Members will be presented with updated information relating to its locally generated sources of funding and any impact that changes, subsequent to the February report, have on the MTFS.

3.4.6. The Council is also awaiting details of possible changes to the operation of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) which was the subject of a consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) from December 2015 to March 2016. This issue together with a revised assessment of the impact upon other funding sources such as grants – Education Support Grant, Public Health Grant etc. totalling £62million will also be brought back to inform the latest funding position for the Council.

3.5. Strategic Support

- 3.5.1. In order to support the Council's strategic long term approach the Council has begun a procurement exercise to identify a partner who will work alongside Council staff to provide additional support and capacity given that there are likely to be a number of transformational activities happening concurrently. The partner will also assist the Council in accessing specialist resources where other organisations have already undertaken and implemented similar proposals.
- 3.5.2. The Invitation to Tender identifies that work has already been undertaken in this area to date with Grant Thornton and CIPFA and identifies a number of potential constraints:
- The capacity of the organisation to work concurrently on a number of complex proposals;
 - The intention to develop proposals that draw on evidence based data and best practice.
 - The need to develop coherently a large number of proposals against a timescale that requires the approval of the Council's budget in February 2017.
- 3.5.3. The strategic partner could be an individual, a company or a consortium with previous experience in supporting the identification and establishment of proposals for both investment and savings in the context of service transformation linked clearly to Priority Outcomes. The key areas of support are identified as:
- Support the Outcome Based Budgeting methodology;
 - Support the MTFS & devise a Transformation Strategy
 - Support Member participation in Outcome Based Budgeting
 - Leadership, People & Culture

3.6. Next Steps

- 3.6.1. A further report will be brought to the October Cabinet which will provide a detailed update of the financial planning assumptions underpinning the current MTFS. The outcome of this will be a confirmation of the estimated savings gap over the period to 2020.
- 3.6.2. The report will also bring forward a number of draft savings and investment proposals, covering in full the medium term planning period to 2020 alongside a strategy that fully meets the identified funding gap and with the intention of initiating formal consultation.

3.7. Budget Consultation and Scrutiny

- 3.7.1. The draft timetable for the budget setting process is as follows:

| Activity | |
|---|---|
| Emerging budget proposals developed which are informed by the four year financial settlement, a review of funding assumptions and planned savings targets | July – September 2016 |
| Draft budget, including consultation proposals for savings and investment. | 4 th October 2016 Cabinet |
| Proposed Budget agreed by Cabinet for approval at Council | 7 th February 2017 Cabinet |
| Agree Final budget and setting of the Council Tax | 2 nd March 2017 Full Council |

Budget Scrutiny Process 2017/20

- 3.7.2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is developing its capacity to meet the challenge of providing effective budget scrutiny, especially as a three year budget will be in place by March 2017. The following sets out the role of overview and scrutiny in the budget preparation process. Some of these reflect the formal constitutional arrangements and others propose additional activity to strengthen the role of OSC in the development of the rolling three year budget.
- 3.7.3. In addition to the scrutiny of relevant revenue savings and investment proposals the Committee will undertake similar scrutiny of capital programme proposals. They will also have an overview of the Medium Term Financial proposals being considered for approval by the Board of Tower Hamlets Homes (THH), including proposals for rent setting, and also the budget strategy for the Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) which will be proposed for approval by the Cabinet, from the Schools Forum.

| Activity | Date | Outcome |
|--|---|---|
| The Cabinet Member and Officers to outline the rationale for the new rolling three year outcome based budget approach. This presentation will include; the aims of the budget, how this differs from the traditional Tower Hamlets way of budget making, relevant timelines and the role of scrutiny in making it a success. | Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting – 1 st September 2016 | Develop understanding of new budget setting process and how OSC can effectively contribute to this. |
| Budget scrutiny training for OSC Members | At present the evenings of 29 th September and the 3 rd , 5 th and 6 th of October are available | Explain the role of OSC Members in budget scrutiny and highlight good practice that demonstrates how this can be effectively carried out. |
| Pre-decision scrutiny of draft budget proposals | Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28 th September. | Review draft budget proposals and identify areas of priority which OSC would like to further consider in detail. |
| Budget Scrutiny Working Group | Mid Nov – Mid Dec 2016 – Dates TBC | <p>Arrange up to 2 additional OSC sessions for November or early December to give OSC Members opportunity to consider specific proposals in depth and help better understand the impact on service users.</p> <p>The outcomes from these sessions will be reported to Cabinet on 6th December or 10th Jan 2017.</p> |
| Budget and Policy Framework – Budget Scrutiny meeting | <p>23rd January 2017</p> <p>13th February 2017 (if there are any changes to budget following Cabinet on 7th Feb)</p> | Review final Cabinet budget proposals and provide comments for consideration by Cabinet and Full Council. |

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1. All financial issues have been fully considered within this report and there are no additional points to make.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1. The report proposes consideration of a revised medium term financial plan. This is a matter that informs the budget process and may be viewed as a related function. It is, in any event, consistent with sound financial management and the Council's obligation under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the Council to adopt and monitor a medium term financial plan.
- 5.2. The report provides information about risks associated with the medium term financial plan and the budget. This is, again, consistent with the Council's obligation under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make proper arrangements for the management of its financial affairs. It is also consistent with the Council's obligation under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to have a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk. The maintenance and consideration of information about risk, such as is provided in the report, is part of the way in which the Council fulfils this duty.
- 5.3. The Council is a best value authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Local Government Act 1999. As such the Council is required 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 (the best value duty). The setting of a medium term financial plan is one of the ways in which the Council can achieve best value.
- 5.4. The Council is required to consult for the purposes of deciding how to fulfil its best value duty. It must consult with representatives of council tax payer, business rates payers, persons likely to use services and persons appearing to have an interest in any area within which the Council carries out functions. As the adoption of a medium term financial plan is one of the Council's existing arrangements, it is arguable that consultation is not required prior to its amendment. However, best value consultation will likely be required at the time of preparing the 2017/2018 budget.

5.5. When considering the medium term financial plan, any savings proposals and the strategic plan, 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 (the public sector equality duty). A proportionate leave of equality analysis is required to inform the consideration required by the public sector equality duty. The report provides the borough equality analysis and sets out how equality impacts are addressed in relation to savings proposals. To the extent that savings proposals involve service changes which impact on individuals, consultation may be required to understand the impacts on those people.

5.6. Any consultation carried out for the purposes of either the best value duty or the public sector equality duty will need to comply with the following requirements: (1) it should be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; (2) the Council must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration and response; (3) adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and (4) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account. The duty to act fairly applies and this may require a greater deal of specificity when consulting people who are economically disadvantaged. It may require inviting and considering views about possible alternatives.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

6.1. The development of a rolling three year Medium Term Financial Strategy will support the more effective delivery of One Tower Hamlets priorities.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The Council is required to consider the value for money implications of its decisions and to secure best value in the provision of all its services. It is important that, in considering the budget, Members satisfy themselves that resources are allocated in accordance with priorities and that full value is achieved.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

8.1. The sustainable action for a greener environment implications of individual proposals in the budget will be set out in the papers relating to those proposals.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1. Managing financial risk is of critical importance to the Council and maintaining financial health is essential for sustaining and improving service performance. Setting a balanced and realistic budget is a key element in this

process. Specific budget risks will be reported to Cabinet as the budget process develops.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The crime and disorder implications of individual proposals in the budget will be set out in the papers relating to those proposals.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1. The safeguarding implications of individual proposals in the budget will be set out in the papers relating to those proposals.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None.

Appendices


- None.

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

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

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| <p>Non-Executive Report of the: Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1st September 2016</p> |  TOWER HAMLETS |
| <p>Report of: Melanie Clay, Director of Law, Probity and Governance Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director Development and Renewal</p> | <p>Classification: Unrestricted</p> |
| <p>Challenge session progress update – Supporting the delivery of successful town centres (high streets and markets)</p> | |

| | |
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| <p>Originating Officer(s)</p> | <p>Chris Holme, Service Head Resources and Economic Development</p> <p>Owen Whalley, Service Head Planning and Building Control</p> <p>Kevin Kewin, Interim Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality</p> <p>Vicky Allen, Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer</p> |
| <p>Wards affected</p> | <p>All</p> |

Summary

This report follows up from the scrutiny challenge session on supporting the delivery of successful town centres (high streets and markets). The report and recommendations were agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2015. An action plan was developed to address the recommendations. The report and accompanying action plan was endorsed by Cabinet in December 2015. This report reviews the progress against the original recommendations.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the progress of the recommendations from the scrutiny challenge session.

1. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The aim of the challenge session was to identify what interventions the Council could make that would be transformative in supporting the economic regeneration of the Borough's town centres.
- 1.2 The report (Appendix One) made sixteen recommendations. Progress against each recommendation is recorded in the accompanying action plan (Appendix Two).
- 1.3 Of the 42 actions developed by services in the scrutiny action plan, 21 were due to be completed in 2015/16 and the remaining 21 are scheduled to complete in 2016/17. There has been progress on the majority of actions despite slippage in the delivery dates, which was mainly caused by a delay in implementing a restructure in the economic development service, and a delay in receiving the GLA grant agreement of the New Homes Bonus funding for the Healthy High Streets work.
- 1.4 Appointments to the Town Centre and High Streets Manager and the High Streets Manager on short term contracts commenced in June 2016. This has enabled the development of a highly experienced team in a relatively short timeframe. These new posts join the existing Roman Road Town Centre Manager and Project Officer posts to complete the Town Centre team.
- 1.5 Work has now completed on pulling together the existing research, audits and information on District Centres, to complete work on area profiles demonstrating commercial concentrations as destinations. Key indicators are being developed to underpin these area profiles. The requirements for procurement of consultants to undertake the Town Centre Strategy are being established and a proposal developed to ensure that the key deadlines are met. The pilot area/s for the project are being analyzed and a proposal is being developed for approval in October 2016.
- 1.6 Work has also been developed to take forward Town Centre activities in the following areas:
 - Brick Lane: an Officers' Working Group has been brought together to oversee the development and delivery of an Improvement Plan. This is focused on a number of key areas – vision and offer; hygiene factors; management of the area; community engagement; planning and heritage; culture and activation of the area and business engagement and involvement. Early win activity is underway with a deep clean and refuse collection times review. A Food Festival is being planned for December, alongside Festive lighting. Recruitment of a Town Centre Manager is now underway.

- Roman Road: the shopfront improvement and vacant property initiative is underway. Good working relationships have been developed with the Roman Road Trust to support their activities. A very successful festival was held in July organized by the Trust.
- Whitechapel: Feasibility activity is continuing with the completion of a Retail Capacity Study for the area. The recommendations are currently being considered.
- Chrisp Street: Poplar HARCA are developing proposals for Chrisp Street Market as part of their broader regeneration programme that forms part of the Poplar Riverside Housing Zone. The regeneration activity aims to rejuvenate and revitalize the existing District Centre by maintaining, enhancing and increasing the supply of town centre activity, including creating 500 jobs, an estimated £10.2m annual spend and floorspace of 19,500. It will also provide a new night time economy in the area. The scheme is programmed to start in 2018 and complete in 2026.
- Bethnal Green Road: Work is underway to improve signage in the area to Petticoat Lane and Columbia Road. A pilot programme of new pop-up uniform rigs is being tried out and new pitch markings are under development. A history and market information board is to be provided in the area.

1.7 The Thriving High Streets work, which is being funded through the New Homes Bonus (NHB), is now progressing well to catch up on the delays in the GLA finalising the grant agreement. While the funding for the project was agreed in 2014, the final agreement for signature was not received by the Council until 13th June 2016. The agreement, which sets out all the financial indicators and outputs expected for the grant is now with the Council's legal team for processing. The delay had impacted on the delivery with the risk attached to commencing ahead of the funding agreement being finalised. However, good progress is now being made on progressing the Town Centre Strategy, with consultants currently being procured to undertake this work.

1.5 Reflecting the important nature of this work for the borough, activities supporting town centre, high street and market regeneration have been reflected as an activity in the new Strategic Plan 2016/17-2018/19: Develop and deliver a High Streets and Town Centres Strategy by March 2017. The milestones for this activity are:

- Develop a new five year markets strategy (May 2016)
- Develop the Whitechapel Town Centre Retail Vision (July 2016)
- Assess retail viability as part of the Local Plan evidence base gathering (July 2016)

- Develop proposals for shop front improvement model of delivery (September 2016)
- Proposal for choice of pilot Town Centre(s) project (September 2016)
- Implement Town Centre toolkits to include:
 - Town Centre indicator list
 - Communications and profiles
 - Generation of Town Centre Partnerships (March 2017).

2. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 2.1 On 1st December 2015, Cabinet approved an action plan for projects to support the delivery of successful town centres. This report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee details the progress that has been made against each of the individual action points that were adopted.
- 2.2 The report outlines that elements of the programme have been delayed while the Council and GLA finalised the grant agreement relating to the 'Thriving High Streets' project which is being funded through 'top-sliced' New Homes Bonus resources (paragraph 1.6). The Council did not wish to put itself at risk by commencing the projects before the full grant arrangements were put in place, but now that these have been agreed the project will be managed in accordance with the grant conditions to ensure that the funding entitlement is maximised.
- 2.3 Many of the action points relate to initial activities that are being undertaken within existing staffing and financial resources. It is likely that when completed, these will result in a range of further activities and priorities for the Council and key partners that will provide a focus for ensuring that available resources are targeted to and in line with these needs. Delivery of these activities will be extremely challenging in the current economic climate, and will require a co-ordinated approach and the alignment of funding from all major partners.

3. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The recommendations in the report appear capable of being carried out within the Council's statutory functions. It will be for officers to ensure this is the case and to take legal advice as necessary.

- 3.3 The Council's Local Plan (Core Strategy 2010), includes a number of strategic objectives in relation to town centres and provides the planning context for the Report. The Council's Local Plan is in turn set in the context of the London policy framework, and the Report refers to the report of the London Councils issued in 2013, entitled 'London Councils Streets Ahead'. The Council's Managing Development Document (2013) forms part of the Local Plan and provides more detailed policies to guide development in town centres. A review of the Local Plan has begun in 2015 and offers an opportunity to consider how the Council's planning policies can protect and support high streets and town centres.
- 3.4 The Council is a best value authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Local Government Act 1999. As such the Council is required 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 (the best value duty). In accordance with the Council's best value arrangements, consideration will need to be given to whether the Committee's recommendations can be delivered within budget and whether they represent value for money.
- 3.5 In its consideration of the report and its recommendations, 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 do not (the public sector equality duty). A proportionate level of equality analysis will be required if the Council pursues the Committee's recommendations.
- 3.6 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

4. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 It is widely recognised that town centres, high streets and markets are vital in supporting opportunities in employment, social capital and economic growth in the area. However, there are many challenges facing town centres including changes in the way people shop, changes in the population demographic, strategic competition and national legislation to name but a few.
- 4.2 The population demographic of people who live and work in the Borough has changed over recent years, becoming more ethnically diverse with more households with an income of above £60,000. Therefore evolving the offer and encouraging new businesses which can capitalise on the needs of new consumers is an essential part of ensuring town centres can thrive.

5. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendations in the original report were made as part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the council, as required under its Best Value duty. This report reviews the success of their implementation.

6. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

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

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

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

9. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct implications of safeguarding as a result of the recommendations in this review.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Review Report: Supporting the delivery of successful town centres (high streets and markets)

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

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

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Supporting the delivery of successful town centres (high streets and markets)

Scrutiny Challenge Session Report



**London Borough of Tower Hamlets
April 2015**

Councillor Joshua Peck

Chair of the review panel, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Our town centres and markets sit at the heart of our communities and are essential for both the social and economic health of those communities.

They provide some of the places – shops, post offices, cafes – where our residents meet and interact with each other, and where they have the casual face-to-face interactions that are the first steps to building social capital and cohesion. They help to make communities where people want to live – where they can easily access the goods and services they need for their daily life, where they can meet friends and socialise, and where vibrant, interesting things happen. And they offer over 10,000 jobs (often good entry-level jobs for those looking for work) and the opportunity to start your own business.

Town centres and their markets should therefore be at the heart of our economic regeneration strategy. Yet when I became a councillor here nine years ago, I was met with blank faces when I talked about town centres – only Canary Wharf was seen to meet the definition and it wasn't under the council's control. As a consequence, little co-ordinated support was available to our town centres and retail units were allowed in every new block of flats built in the borough, dissipating the focus of town centres and damaging many.

That has changed. The Core Strategy is built around the idea of our town centres being at the heart of the 'hamlets' that make up our borough and we have a dedicated Town Centre team to support our town centres.

Yet town centres face massive challenges – from changing retail habits, from crippling business rates, from pressure to convert shop units to residential – and if our town centres are going to survive then our response as a council needs to be dynamic and entrepreneurial, and it needs to be about more than just making sure the street are clean and safe. The next phase of our approach to town centre management needs to be about the curation and intervention that creates places where people want to shop and spend their leisure time.

The ideas in this report came from the private and public sector organisations that already do this and hopefully gives us the confidence that we can do the same.

Summary of recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** Develop a vision for each town centre that identifies the unique selling point and retail offer it needs to attract its target market
- **Recommendation 2:** Promote the opportunity for local town teams to be formed by residents and businesses and put in place a toolkit to support this. Encourage these town teams to be engaged in the development of the local vision
- **Recommendation 3:** If feasible, develop a range of economic, environmental and social regeneration initiatives to attract footfall and spend, encourage new businesses and support existing businesses into town centres – examples include:
 - Support in initial establishment of websites and business associations/forums for marketing of the town centres to consumers and other enterprises;
 - Continuation of the use of art, cultural activities and events to establish town centres as destinations, with a presumption on these being resident-led where possible, with support and technical assistance (ie in securing Council licences and approvals) provided by the Council;
 - Strategic, focussed grant programmes for shop front improvements which support the agreed vision and objectives of town centres;
 - Pop up shops, stalls or kiosks which allow both the Council and businesses to ‘test the water’
 - Explore the potential for ring-fencing future business rate growth from schemes like this to forward fund them
- **Recommendation 4:** Develop a high streets and town centres policy which establishes a local vision, strategy and plan for town centres in the Borough, focussed on economic regeneration as the central objective. Ensure that any update of the Town Centre Spatial Strategy (July 2009), as part of the Local Plan review, takes the above into account
- **Recommendation 5:** Adopt suitable town centre KPIs, starting with the ATCM model which measure the economic and wider health of our town centres
- **Recommendation 6:** Review role and responsibilities of the Roman Road Town Centre Manager post to ensure it is focussed on delivering the targeted interventions identified in the Roman Road Vision and, subject to funding, roll out for other town centres across the Borough
- **Recommendation 7:** Review the support available to local businesses in the Borough and proactively promote it
- **Recommendation 8:** Provide data analysis that will stimulate potential opportunities in the Borough’s town centres, including qualitative and quantitative data, demographic analysis of the resident and working populations, outline existing market analysis, and external drivers for change
- **Recommendation 9:** Explore the potential for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the Borough and, where potential BID areas are

identified, work in partnership with the business network to promote the business benefits to local enterprises, including the GLA's programme of support for future BIDs

- **Recommendation 10:** Explore developing a package of inducements that could be offered to targeted businesses identified as essential in town centre visions
- **Recommendation 11:** Explore the viability of an approach whereby the Council will consider, in a small number of cases, taking on a short-term lease and grant-funding the fit-out to create a unit to market to specific retail uses identified as essential to the development of a local town centre vision
- **Recommendation 12:** Roll out the policy for accepting new traders into our markets to ensure that the retail offer within markets can be more actively curated
- **Recommendation 13:** Finalise and formalise the Council's approach to proactively establishing and using tools to encourage owners of vacant high street retail premises to bring them back into use
- **Recommendation 14:** Identify and engage with absentee landlords to identify current premises use and explore options for alternative uses
- **Recommendation 15:** Convene a working group to identify how retail units may be protected through planning measures from unsuitable conversion as part of the Local Plan review
- **Recommendation 16:** Develop a retail unit viability study

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is widely recognised that town centres, high streets and markets are vital in supporting opportunities in employment, social capital and economic growth in the area. However, there are many challenges facing town centres including changes in the way people shop, changes to the population demographic, strategic competition and national legislation to name a few.
- 1.2 According to the LGIU¹, the key trends impacting on the UK's town centres are summarised as follows:
- Changing consumer expectations, and a preference for a combined retail and leisure experience
 - Consumer demand for convenience, including both large supermarkets and smaller convenience supermarkets
 - Online shopping and multi-channel shopping
 - Out of town retail
 - Changing demographics
 - Increasing homogeneity within the business centres, and
 - Difficult economic conditions, with consumers increasingly turning to discount stores.
- 1.3 The population demographic of people who live and work in the Borough has changed over recent years, becoming more ethnically diverse and with more households with an income of above £60,000. Therefore evolving the offer and encouraging new business which can capitalise on the needs of new consumers is an essential part of ensuring town centres thrive.
- 1.4 The Council has several key strategies which support the regeneration of town centres. They include the Enterprise Strategy, the Street Markets Strategy (August 2009), and the Town Centre Spatial Strategy (July 2009), which sets out how Town Centres could be developed to ensure 'they are places at the heart of local civic life, which are vibrant, inclusive and accessible'.
- 1.5 However, there was a high level of concern amongst some Councillors that these strategies lack strategic vision and innovative approaches to push economic growth in town centres, and that responses too often focus on relatively easy 'hygiene factors', such as security, street furniture and cleanliness, which should be the base point of good town centre management.
- 1.6 The aim of the Challenge Session was therefore to look at best practice models in order to explore what makes a town centre thriving, and identify actions which could better support town centres to thrive in Tower Hamlets. The session was chaired by Cllr Joshua Peck, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny. It took place on 8th April 2015.

¹ Local Government Information Unit policy briefing: policy implications of recent trends in the high street/retail sector, January 2015

1.7 The session was attended by:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Councillor Joshua Peck | Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Councillor, Bow West |
| Councillor Peter Golds | Scrutiny Lead for Law, Probity and Governance;; Councillor, Island Gardens |
| Councillor Rachel Blake | Councillor, Bow East |
| Cllr Danny Hassell | Councillor, Bromley South |
| Victoria Ekubia | Scrutiny Committee Roman Catholic Church Representative |
| Rev James Olanipekun | Scrutiny Committee Parent Governor |
| Shanaaz Carroll | Acting CE, Association of Town and City Management |
| Howard Dawber | Strategic Advisor at Canary Wharf Group |
| Stuart Fyfe | Head of Retail Leasing at Canary Wharf Group |
| Christine Lovett | Chief Executive, Angel AIM (Action; Improve; Maintain) |
| Keith Davis | Managing Director, Borough Market |
| Sam Neal | Programme Manager Physical Regeneration, Waltham Forest Council |
| Chris Paddock | Director, Regeneris Consulting Ltd |
| Andy Scott | Acting Service Head for Economic Development, Tower Hamlets Council |
| Chris Golds | Principal Licensing and Revenues Officer, Tower Hamlets Council |
| Maria Gerring | Business Partnerships Project Manager, Tower Hamlets Council |
| Vicky Allen | Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer, Tower Hamlets Council |

- 1.8 The Scrutiny Challenge Session took the format of a meeting which was held in the Idea Store, Canary Wharf.
- 1.9 The agenda for the session included an introduction to the key issues under review by Councillor Joshua Peck. Following this, attendees heard from Shanaaz Carroll, the Acting Chief Executive of the Association of Town and City Management (**ATCM**) who spoke about the challenges for town centres, the work that the ATCM were undertaking to support businesses in town centres, and what the ATCM saw as the ingredients for a successful future for town centres.
- 1.10 A presentation from the Council's Head of Economic Development provided background information on past work and current action being taken by the Council to support town centres in the Borough. In addition, attendees also heard about the plans going forward, such as the Healthy High Streets project tackling unhealthy businesses and promoting the economic wellbeing of town centres and high streets; and the dedicated team supporting the delivery of the regeneration activity taking place in Whitechapel. With the opening of the new Crossrail station in 2018, this area has been identified as a growth opportunity, with plans including a civic hub, new homes, new jobs, upgraded Whitechapel Road and surrounding public squares and open spaces.

- 1.11 Senior representatives from other London town centres, high streets and markets spoke about the innovative approaches they applied successfully to support their economic regeneration. Finally there was a round table discussion focussing on answering the core questions for the session:
- a) What changes could be transformative for town centres in Tower Hamlets; and
 - b) What actions could the Council (and its partners) take to help achieve this?
- 1.12 In this report, the term 'town centres' is being used to describe all the town centres, high streets and markets in the Borough.

2. NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

Policy and delivery context

- 2.1 Activity in town centres in Tower Hamlets is influenced by national, regional and local policy. Government guidance *'Transforming Places; Changing Lives: A Framework for Regeneration'* proposes that Government expenditure on regeneration in the future should be focused on:
- Improving economic performance in deprived areas;
 - Improving rates of work and enterprise in deprived areas; and
 - Creating sustainable places where people want to live and can work, and businesses want to invest.

The Portas Review

- 2.2 As part of the Government's growth agenda, Mary Portas was asked to conduct an independent review of the high street's future. In 2011, the Portas Review set out proposals for combating the decline of the UK's high streets. The recommendations included a number of proposals to reduce regulation relating to the High Street, change planning regulations and to support new businesses. The most significant proposal was that "town teams" should be created in town centres, representing all stakeholders. A town team would be able to give strategic direction to beneficial change. Mary Portas suggested that there should be a number of pilot projects in town centres to test out her suggestions in different localities. In 2012 the Borough was chosen as one of the second round Portas Pilots for Watney and Chrisp Street Markets (see 4.3).

High Street Innovation Fund

- 2.3 In 2012, the Government announced the names of 100 local authorities, including Tower Hamlets, which would receive £100,000 each to support regeneration of town centres under the *High Street Innovation Fund*. Guidance was issued on the same day for use of the funding, and was mainly concerned with overcoming vacancies in commercial premises with new retail enterprise development (see 5.48 below).

London policy framework: the GLA

- 2.4 GLA priorities have affected the delivery of a number of Outer London Fund and London Portas Pilot projects. There is a preference for projects which:
- bring disused buildings and vacant land back into use;
 - put on events to support community use of the town centre concerned;
 - redesign public space;
 - smarten shop fronts;

- support businesses;
- create partnership networks;
- improve transport;
- support suitable site development projects.

London policy framework: London Councils' Report: Streets Ahead? – putting high streets at the heart of local economic growth

- 2.5 In July 2013, London Councils issued a report *Streets Ahead* which celebrated the diversity of town centres and called for more local government involvement in High Street renewal. Specific recommendations included changes in planning policy to restrict changes of use; harmonisation between TfL priorities and local transport policy; coordination of business support initiatives; and better ways of tackling vacant spaces and commercial vacancies.

3. LOCAL CONTEXT

Local policy framework: LBTH planning policy

- 3.1 The Council's Local Plan provides the planning basis for activity to reinforce and improve town centres and the role they play in the quality of life for Borough residents. The Local Plan Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2010, includes a number of strategic objectives in relation to town centres intended to help bring about "a hierarchy of interconnected, vibrant and inclusive town centres that are mixed use hubs for retail, commercial, leisure, civic and residential [uses]."
- 3.2 The Council's Managing Development DPD, which also forms part of the Local Plan, includes more detailed policies to guide development in town centres. These include
- measures to protect A1 retail uses in town centres
 - restrictions on A5 takeaway uses in town centres and in proximity to schools and leisure centres, and
 - protection for local shops outside town centres.
- 3.3 A refresh of the Local Plan began in 2015 offering an opportunity to consider how the Council's planning policies can protect and support high streets and town centres, and in particular high street uses which fall outside existing town centre boundaries.
- 3.4 The Council is currently implementing a range of projects specifically focused in one way or another on the regeneration of high streets or town centres in the Borough. These include:
- Delivery of the Whitechapel Vision
 - The Council's Accelerated Delivery Programme funded initiatives in Roman Road, Brick Lane, Bethnal Green and Burdett Road
 - Portas Pilot initiatives in Chrisp Street, Watney Market and Roman Road
 - The Enterprising Town Centres Initiative pilot project in Roman Road, and
 - The Healthy High Streets Policy

4 TOWN CENTRES / HIGH STREETS AND MARKETS IN TOWER HAMLETS

- 4.1 Tower Hamlets has a thriving economy worth £6bn per annum that provides almost 1.4 jobs for every working-age resident of the Borough. At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 12,976 people employed in the wholesale and retail sector in the Borough (10 percent of all jobs available).
- 4.2 The Office for National Statistics recorded 14,940 businesses in the Borough for 2014; this number represents about 3.2 percent of the business stock in London. The majority of businesses in the Borough (89 percent) are micro business enterprises employing less than 10 people. 1,260 businesses in the Borough (8 percent) are classified as retail trade and 980 businesses (7 percent) are classified as food and beverage services activities.

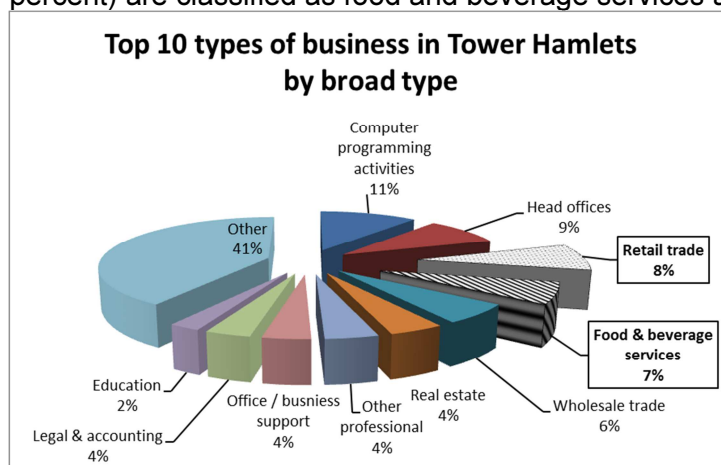


Figure 1: Nomis UK Business Counts March 2014

- 4.3 There² are 27 designated town centres in the Borough, with Canary Wharf being the most prominent. Canary Wharf is designated as a major³ centre in the London Plan and the Tower Hamlets Core Strategy with over 50,000sqm of retail floorspace including both comparison and convenience⁴ retail. It also includes services and leisure facilities. Canary Wharf serves a large weekday worker population as well as weekday and weekend residential population.
- 4.4 Nine town centres are classified as district centres (Bethnal Green; Brick Lane; Bromley-by-Bow; Chrisp Street; Crossharbour; Roman Road (east); Roman Road (west); Watney Market; and Whitechapel) – district centres comprise of groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket and a range of non-retail services such as banks, building societies and restaurants as well as local public facilities such as a library.
- 4.5 The remaining 17 are defined as neighbourhood or local centres meaning that they include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment – typically containing a small supermarket, a newsagent, hot food take-aways, and similar small businesses.

² The designation criteria of Activity Areas, Major Centres, District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres can be found in the LBTH LDF Town Centre Boundaries and Balance of Uses Review – February 2012 (p6)

³ Information taken from draft alterations to the London Plan – January 2014 and LBTH LDF Town Centre Boundaries and Balance of Uses Review – February 2012

⁴ Convenience goods: Broadly defined as food, drinks, tobacco, newspapers, magazines, cleaning materials, toilet articles. Comparison goods: Other goods not classified as convenience goods. (NRPf definition)

- 4.6 In addition, the Borough has some of the best known and most successful street markets in London which are often co-located within town centres identified above. Street markets contribute positively to the economic and social well-being of the community providing access to affordable goods and complement mainstream retailing. They provide local employment and support local enterprise. Throughout the Borough, the markets provide a range of goods and services, serving the Borough's diverse communities. Some of the Borough's markets are specialist markets with a wider catchment whilst others are local markets which serve and support their local communities. It is estimated that LBTH street markets have a turnover of £21m per year.
- 4.7 There are ten local-authority managed street markets across the Borough. Additionally there are a number of privately-managed markets which operate within the Borough, including Brick Lane and Spitalfields Markets. The markets vary in size, days of operation and offer. Columbia Road, Petticoat Lane and Brick Lane are tourist markets with a high profile and London-wide catchment. The other markets in contrast provide a convenience offer which caters primarily for a local catchment.

Promoting the Borough's town centres, markets and high streets

- 4.8 The Street Markets Strategy (August 2009) aims to positively shape the markets as safe and lively places in which the community engages and which are thriving places of business and employment for local people. The Council's Enterprise Strategy aim is to encourage and support enterprise and entrepreneurial activity to increase opportunity, prosperity and mobility in Tower Hamlets by:
- supporting the establishment, growth and development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs);
 - providing an environment that supports a thriving and diverse economic base; and
 - supporting the Borough's enterprise economy by communicating local needs and wishes to influence audiences.
- 4.9 There has been a raft of initiatives which have aimed to both promote the Borough's town centres to consumers and to support new and existing businesses, including the *Taste Brick Lane* marketing campaign in March 2014, which widely promoted this famous food district to visitors and tourists through printed publications and social media and included food discounts and a street party. The *Shop Tower Hamlets* (#shoptowerhamlets) campaign in December 2014, consisted of three different promotional booklets for Roman Road, Bethnal Green Road, and Burdette Road, circulated to households promoting local shopping to residents with discounts included.
- 4.10 Supporting the economic regeneration of town centres, the Council was awarded £100,000 from the national *Portas Pilot Initiative*, to which a similar sum was achieved through match funding, for regeneration and promotion of improvements to Chrisp Street, Watney Market and Roman Road. The primary focus was to boost economic regeneration in Chrisp Street Market through lively events and diversification of the market's offer. Funding was used for a new outdoor dining area aiming to connect fresh produce sold in the market to the kitchens in surrounding cafes and restaurants. A continuous programme of events was established to attract custom, and

market traders and café owners were offered workshops and mentoring and a new market business directory and website to help boost their businesses. As part of the package of works at Chrisp Street Market, designers will produce recommendations for changes and improvements to Watney Market and Roman Road. The proposals will build on new facilities established at Chrisp Street, continuing the theme of healthy living. Through the important lessons learned at Chrisp Street, it is hoped that further funding will be secured for Watney Market and Roman Road for similar activities in the future.

- 4.11 In March 2015, the Mayor of London announced a further round of recipients for the *High Street Fund*; two of the 42 town centres across London are in the Borough. Whitechapel was awarded £520,000 for a package of improvements, designed to increase workspace provision in previously vacant buildings and provide business support to promote a lively economy, to build on the momentum of change in Whitechapel. Chrisp Street was awarded £283,000 for a suite of interventions including a new co-working space, tailored business support and business loans are supporting new enterprise and existing trade.
- 4.12 For markets, the Council took part in the national initiative to support new market stall holders through the *First Pitch* scheme. First Pitch is a market trader start-up scheme run by the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF), delivered in partnership with market operators all over the UK offering free trade for up to five days during Love Your Local Market week. If traders meet the specified criteria, and, if trading has gone well, they can continue to trade on the market for a further 12 months at discounted rent. Practical support from the NMTF is provided including mentoring to help traders make a success.

5. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 This Challenge Session arose because there was a concern amongst some Members that there had been no strategic review of the Council's interventions so far to assess their effectiveness in their aim of supporting the regeneration of the Borough's town centres. Members felt that interventions so far were focussed too much on physical regeneration, cleaning and security, and cultural activities, and less on active interventions to address the market failures of local retail economies. There was a strong belief amongst Members that supporting a thriving local retail economy was essential to improving economic prosperity in the Borough.
- 5.2 In addition, some Members were concerned that town centres were not responding to the retail needs of the Borough's changing population demographic (a shift towards more young, professional, affluent residents). Members felt that the spending power of this potentially under-served market could help stimulate economic regeneration around the Borough rather than being concentrated in small pockets.
- 5.3 The aim of the Challenge Session was therefore to identify what interventions the Council could make that would be transformative in supporting the economic regeneration of the Borough's town centres. To this end, Members heard evidence from Officers from the Council's Economic Development service, the ATCM, Angel AIM, Borough Market, Canary Wharf Group Ltd, and Waltham Forest Council. Members focussed the round table discussions

on stimulating economic regeneration through building relationships, such as: between potential shoppers and retailers, between retailers and landlords; and between landlords and the Council.

- 5.4 At the session, issues relating to leadership, support and engagement were identified.

Putting together a retail offer which is right for each town centre

- 5.5 Shanaaz Carroll from the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) identified the ATCM's main ingredients for the future town centres as local planning and strong leadership. Participants agreed and said that as leaders they used their wide experience, local knowledge and 'gut feeling' when first establishing a strategic plan of action for regenerating their respective town centres. Christine Lovett from Angel AIM said that she sought out and spoke to landlords to get support for a long term commitment to the economic viability of the town centre including getting them share her vision for the right mix of businesses within the area. She spoke about how she persuaded one landlord to pick one type of retail business over another to help create that right mix, despite the landlord achieving a reduced rental income by doing so.
- 5.6 The report '*Retail-led regeneration why it matters to our communities*'⁵ says securing an anchor tenant is key to the success of the town centre as it can attract trade to the high street and influence the remaining tenant mix. Stuart Fyfe from Canary Wharf Group said that his gut feeling when working on the regeneration of Marylebone high Street was to identify Waitrose as the anchor store for the high street as he felt that this would set the tone for regeneration and subsequently attract the range of other identified shops that they saw as crucial to attracting the audience they were targeting. Sam Neal from Waltham Forest Council said that for Wood Street, a competitive process for the empty units in the indoor market was set with the aim of attracting the right mix of tenants that would boost the overall appeal of the town centre.

The value of Unique Selling Points

- 5.7 All participants agreed that it was important for town centres to identify their own unique selling points (USPs) and use this to develop a vision, strategy and action plan. However there was some debate about the extent to which consulting with residents about the strategic direction of town centres was useful. Some participants felt that consulting local residents and businesses could lead to a stifling of ideas and creativity because they were not always best placed to see the bigger picture, especially knowing about and understanding external factors which are not in their or the Local Authority's control, for example the impact of Crossrail and the changing demographics of the Borough. Councillor Golds agreed, highlighting the opening of the five Tesco Metros on the Isle of Dogs which despite local resistance to them not being 'the right kind of retail needed', are much used.
- 5.8 Emphasising the point about creating a USP for each town centre, Chris Paddock from Regeneris said that retailers should be discouraged from competing against other town centres in the locality. Also he said that retailers should be encouraged to work together within the town centre and become complementary to nearby town centres such as the City Fringe area

⁵ Retail-led regeneration, why it matters to our communities: DTZ, Business in the Community, BCSC Educational Trust 2008.

with 'Tech City' and the neighbouring Whitechapel which could capitalise on sciences. Councillor Golds highlighted the 'two Stratfords' – the new Westfield and the old Stratford shopping centre which complement each other in terms of retail outlets and catering for different shoppers.

- 5.9 Stuart Fyfe agreed, adding that he promoted the individual charm of town centres in the Borough such Petticoat Lane, Brick Lane, Columbia Road to businesses considering moving into the Canary Wharf complex as attractions for their workers.
- 5.10 Chris Paddock said that local councillors, as elected leaders for their communities, could be best placed to identify local visions for each town centre. He said that there was an information-providing and analysis role for the Council to play to support elected leaders in decision-making.
- 5.11 The Town Teams model has been heavily promoted and supported by the DCLG and the ATCM as a good way of getting together a partnership of stakeholders to provide leadership and management for town centres. In Tower Hamlets a Town Team was set up in Watney Market for the lifetime of the Portas Pilot but was then disbanded. In Chrisp Street Market the existing Town Team supported the delivery of the Portas Pilot initiatives and this work is still ongoing as is the Town Team. In Roman Road, residents and businesses set up the Borough's first town team and successfully bid for a small grant from the Portas Pilot project. The town team has become well established and now operates as the Roman Road Residents and Business Association (RBBA), a Community Interest Company. The RRRBA has developed a resident-led Vision for the Roman Road, and delivered a number of regeneration projects in collaboration with the Council.
- **Recommendation 1:** Develop a vision for each town centre that identifies the unique selling point and retail offer it needs to attract its target market
- **Recommendation 2:** Promote the opportunity for local town teams to be formed by residents and businesses and put in place a toolkit to support this. Encourage these town teams to be engaged in the development of the local vision

Healthy High Streets and social and environmental regeneration

- 5.12 A recent report by the *Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)* named two Tower Hamlets High Streets (Whitechapel and Chrisp Street) in its top ten 'unhealthiest' London High Streets. The Society, members of the public and public health experts assessed high streets according to the types of businesses found and scored businesses on the extent to which they encouraged healthy choices, promoted social interaction, provided access to health advice and promoted positive mental wellbeing. RSPH's recommendations to create a healthier mix of retail in high streets included:
- Local authorities to be given greater planning powers to prevent the proliferation of betting shops, payday lenders and fast food outlets;
 - Public health criteria to be a condition of licensing for all types of business;
 - Mandatory food hygiene ratings linked to calorie and nutrition labelling for fast food outlets;
 - A limit of 5% of each of the above types of business on a high street in order to avoid oversaturation and provide affordable choice; and

- Legislation to enable local councils to set their own differential business rates to encourage healthier outlets and discourage those that are detrimental to health.
- 5.13 Andy Scott from Tower Hamlets Economic Development service spoke about the development of the Council's *Healthy High Streets Policy*. The policy aims to combine the recommendation from the Council's 2012 Fairness Commission report to limit unhealthy businesses (including fast food, payday loan and gambling outlets) and to promote the economic wellbeing of town centres, particularly in terms of the Use of Classification Order system, and the coordination of the wide range of Council services which have, or have the potential to have, an impact on the 'health' of the Borough's town centres. These range from strategic functions such as the development of planning policy, through periodic activity such as highways and public realm maintenance, to day-to-day operations such as street cleansing, markets management, or the work of Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers.
- 5.14 The Mayor of London's *'Action for High Streets'* report recommends that successful town centres should be welcoming, distinctive, diverse and growing. Increasing the attractiveness and enhancing the character of the high streets through community events, public arts installations, lighting and festivals encourages people to spend their leisure time in the high street leading to increased footfall and spend. There was consensus amongst most participants that social and environmental regeneration was important and complementary in helping bring about economic regeneration; all three areas are interlinked. Both Shanaaz Carroll and Chris Paddock said that unless environmental issues such as cleaning up the public realm, lighting and community safety issues were addressed, it would be harder to attract the right kind of retailers to invest in the area.
- 5.15 Several participants felt that art installations, events and creating an overall environment for social interaction could also help to endear a town centre to consumers and create buy-in from retailers and other businesses. Howard Dawber from Canary Wharf Group reported that when Canary Wharf was being established he had a hard job to persuade retailers that this was good business sense which would draw in the customers who will then shop. Canary Wharf now hosts a variety of arts and events activities, many of which are free. Last summer this included table tennis pop up events and alfresco dance performances (Dancing City), monthly lunch market (April-September) supporting many small producers and independent traders as well as food from Canary Wharf's local restaurants and eateries. In addition, the large collection of public art in Canary Wharf group was a draw to visitors who might not usually visit the town centre.
- 5.16 In Wood Street, Sam Neal spoke about some of the small-scale ongoing physical and social regeneration projects such as a community planting day and an outdoor film screening. These events have complemented the market improvements and helped to revitalise the wider high street. Thirty shop front designs were developed through collaboration between emerging designers and shopkeepers. This has also provided exposure for the designers for future opportunities. The Wood Street Plaza was re-designed to make it more user-friendly with spaces to relax and play and with better connections to the market. New and existing businesses bought into the regeneration of the town centre. They worked together on the launch the regenerated town centre which attracted 500 people.

5.17 In Tower Hamlets, the High Street 2012 has carried out a shop front and building restoration programme along Whitechapel Road which has had a transformational impact on the way the high street looks and feels. An earlier programme in Roman Road was much smaller and pepper-potted grants along the length of the Roman Road East District Centre, meaning its impact was significantly dissipated.

➤ **Recommendation 3:** If feasible, develop a range of economic, environmental and social regeneration initiatives to attract footfall and spend, encourage new businesses, and support existing businesses into town centres – examples include:

- Support in initial establishment of websites and business associations/forums for marketing of the town centres to consumers and other enterprises;
- Continuation of the use of art, cultural activities and events to establish town centres as destinations, with a presumption on these being resident-led where possible, with support and technical assistance (ie in securing council licences and approvals) provided by the Council;
- Strategic, focussed grant programmes for shop front improvements which support the agreed vision and objectives of town centres;
- Pop up shops, stalls or kiosks which allow both the Council and businesses to 'test the water'
- Explore the potential for ring-fencing future business rate growth from schemes like this to forward fund them

➤ **Recommendation 4:** Develop a high streets and town centres policy which establishes a local vision, strategy and plan for town centres in the Borough, focussed on economic regeneration as the central objective. Ensure that any update of the Town Centre Spatial Strategy, as part of the Local Plan review, takes the above into account

5.18 Members felt that there was currently no effective mechanism to assess the effectiveness of interventions on the economic regeneration in town centres. This is essential in order to ensure scarce resources are targeted in the most effective way. Establishing a Town Baseline as a snapshot of current standards and performance and conducting regular and systematic reviews of the town strategy and action plan is seen as a key element of a model for good leadership according to the DCLG-led *Future High Street Task and Finish Group*.

5.19 Members felt that indicators should be measurable and reported on a regular basis in order to ensure they are effective and to ensure remedial action can be taken if necessary. Indicators should benchmark the Borough's performance against other Local Authorities.

5.20 With regard to identifying indicators to measure the success of regeneration, there was a consensus that the indicators toolkit produced with the study published by Gloucestershire LEP '*Successful town centres – developing effective strategies*' should be used as a starting point rather than 'reinventing the wheel'. It was felt that these generic indicators could be adapted where necessary to make sure they are locally relevant. The four composite indicators within the toolkit are grouped around the themes of performance, local economic context, size and diversity.

- **Recommendation 5:** Adopt suitable town centre KPIs, starting with the ATCM model which measure the economic and wider health of our town centres

Dedicated support from councils

- 5.21 Members felt that offering practical support for businesses was essential to attracting them to the Borough's high streets. They felt that one practical measure which could be implemented was to make the process of setting up business in the area smoother, leaner and less bureaucratic. In addition, offering advice and guidance to potential and existing businesses could help them to establish roots and grow. It is recognised that there is a role for councils to provide effective business support for retailers; some examples from were explored at the Challenge Session are presented below:
- 5.22 Members heard that in the London Borough of Waltham Forest there is a Town Centre Programme Manager role for economic regeneration for specific areas in the Borough. Sam Neil explained that the role enables her to have a strategic overview of the issues in the town centre and engages with all internal and external partners for holistic problem-solving, making linkages with local business forums, council services (economic development, markets, clean and green services, transport, public health etcetera) and councillors in order to resolve issues collectively.
- 5.23 In the London Borough of Newham, the Council provides support to businesses within the old Stratford shopping centre (which is now competing with the adjacent Westfield City). The shopping centre has rebranded as 'Stratford Island' which now includes a new gallery space and events to attract consumers. To support the economic regeneration of the shopping centre, a new Business Lab has opened providing free support to help small businesses get off the ground and growing. There are free weekly workshops, seminars and one-to-one coaching and potential small business owners are able to use the space to meet clients and run events.
- 5.24 In Tower Hamlets the Council has been piloting a town centre management approach in Roman Road since 2013. This has included the appointment of a town centre manager for the area, delivery of Christmas events and support for the locally-organised summer festival, extensive engagement with local stakeholders, and the development of a detailed action plan for the area following a town centre competitiveness audit funded by ADP. Although it is too soon to assess the long-term effectiveness of this approach in making the town centre more economically successful, he said it has been widely welcomed by local stakeholders as an important step towards the revitalisation of the area.
- 5.25 The *Tower Hamlets Markets Strategy* identifies traders support and training as crucial for market traders to help them tap into the potential of the changing demographic in the Borough. The Council's business and enterprise section on its website offers advice on starting or expanding a business as well as pinpointing services relevant to businesses. It lists businesses and networking groups in the area, sources of business finance and grants, and sources of business support external to the Council. The Enterprise Team produces a quarterly enterprise bulletin highlighting emerging issues and research, events and signposting to partnership organisations who provide free training. Recent and upcoming workshops

and events advertised include: Inspiring Responsible Entrepreneurship organised by Business in the Community, The Food Exchange organised by Enterprise Nation, Visual Social Media Marketing organised by LSBC, and 6 steps to a better business organised by Action Coach. The Council uses its business database and social media to proactively market this support to business in the Borough.

- **Recommendation 6:** Review role and responsibilities of the Roman Road Town Centre Manager post to ensure it is focussed on delivering the targeted interventions identified in the Roman Road Vision, and subject to funding, roll out for other town centres across the Borough
- **Recommendation 7:** Review the support available to local businesses in the Borough and proactively promote it

Utilising data and research to support regeneration

- 5.26 Participants felt that one of the most important ways in which councils could attract retailers into town centres was by providing a strong evidence base of qualitative and quantitative information to 'set the scene' for potential investors.
- 5.27 The Mayor for London's 2013 *London Town Centre Health Check Analysis Report* written in March 2014 identifies massive changes, future growth and potential for Whitechapel and Canary Wharf town centres, reporting an increase in the 45 minute catchment area by 2031 of between 1.4m and 1.7m potential consumers due to population increase and improvements in transport links.
- 5.28 Experian has identified five key consumer trends that characterise certain consumer behaviours in light of the economy, demographic change, and changing technology. Combined with well-established trends such as the demand for convenience, experience and choice, a composite picture of the future UK consumer can be developed:
- Getting older: focus on good services and leisure in nice, safe, local places
 - Expect choice: want to be able to shop and live on own terms. Business must meet our needs – anywhere and anytime
 - Use technology: technology is part of life, use it for information, shopping, socialising and deal hunting
 - Driven by value: new outlook, less credit, high costs, depressed income
 - Want experiences: leisure is important; we want places that offer unique retail, cultural, social experiences.
- 5.29 Responding to these will depend on each town centres catchment requirements and USP. Chris Paddock said that research indicates that consumers want more authenticity, and alternative shopping experiences to complement the traditional mix of high street retail businesses. ATCM guidance advises town centres to assess current vacancy rates and gaps by retail category and use this insight to attract businesses / retailers based on the current and future demographic nature of the town.
- 5.30 Keith Davis said that Borough Market had used research which showed that many people do not start thinking about what to have for dinner until 4pm to

encourage market stall holders to open later and stay open later in order to capitalise. Stuart Fyfe said that Canary Wharf Group had spent a lot of time persuading retail businesses to invest in Canary Wharf; one of their main retailers initially said no when they approached them to be an anchor store because of their pre-perceived ideas and prejudices about the area. When liaising with retailers, CWG emphasise the working population and changing demographics in the Borough as retail modelling is often based on out of date or incorrect assumptions. (The daytime population of the Borough is 392,960⁶ or 430,326 including tourists, over 120,000 more than the resident population.)

5.31 The Council's Corporate Research Unit already produces a number of products which are available to members of the public via the website, although it is unclear whether this is actively promoted as a tool for businesses. Analysis of economic and business data is available to help in the understanding of business structures in the Borough, changes over time and new emerging employment patterns, focussing on key sectors and specific geographies in the Borough. The Local Economic Assessment includes a comprehensive analysis of the local economy, the labour market, including demand and supply relationships in the Borough. The Research Unit also produces fact sheets on the demography of the Borough, such as population key facts and population projections, which could provide invaluable insight for businesses.

5.32 However, some data sets, such as footfall analysis or demographic data grouped by town centre catchment, are not readily available.

- **Recommendation 8:** Provide data analysis that will stimulate potential opportunities in the Borough's town centres, including qualitative and quantitative data, demographic analysis of the resident and working populations, outline existing market analysis, and external drivers for change

BIDS

5.33 Participants felt that Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) were often a good way of creating an environment where local businesses work together to build on economic attractiveness of the area and increase consumer footfall and spend. The ATCM actively promote BIDs and they are included in the Mayor of London's Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and the London Plan which highlight their role in 'place shaping' of town centres. Both the GLA and the ATCM fund a range of activities to support existing BIDs as well as future BIDs.

5.34 Christine Lovett explained that Angel chose the BID model to secure a number of years' worth of funding in order to achieve the ambition of economically regenerating the area. The BID Board spoke to businesses individually and independently of the Council, fostering relationships with businesses, and eliciting support for the BID. She found that businesses were often more positive towards an approach by the BID Board as opposed to the LA because they felt that the Board was working for them, and often felt that LAs worked against their best interests. The Angel BID has been a great success; fundamental to that success was a combination of the partnership work with the police improving safety in the area and the work of the BID Board in persuading tenants that this was the right option.

⁶ GLA London Datastore, Population during the daytime, Borough 2013 data released January 2015.

5.35 Both the GLA and ATCM acknowledged that not all high streets can or want to set up BIDs. Often there is a high proportion of businesses in town centres which are not eligible ⁷to pay the BID levy which could bring into question the viability of a BID. The decision to go for a BID is driven and led by businesses, there are statutory legal and procedural activities undertaken by the Council which are resource intensive and carry financial costs borne by the local authority. However the GLA offers some funding to ease this burden.

- **Recommendation 9:** Explore the potential for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the Borough and, where potential BID areas are identified, work in partnership with the business network to promote the business benefits to local enterprises, including the GLA's programme of support for future BIDs

Attracting retail businesses

5.36 Attracting retail businesses is an important task in building healthier local retail economies. Many of our town centres have high occupancy rates, yet are missing key businesses that would support their transformation. Some of our town centres struggle to attract the specific retail businesses that have been identified as essential to the success of the centre's retail ecology. For example, the Roman Road East Vision – developed by the RRRBA – identifies good quality food as a key part of the Roman Road's offer going forward and singles out a butcher as the main priority to attract to the road. Despite efforts, it has proved hard to secure the interest of local butchers, who base their assessments of the Roman Road on its recent history of decline not on the opportunity that exists there. Some ten years ago, the anchor supermarket closed on Roman Road and a new Tesco is still yet to open, damaging the overall success of the retail centre as shoppers go elsewhere for their food staples.

5.37 Gloucestershire's '*Successful town centres – developing effective strategies*' report plots the 'performance' KPIs against the 'local economic context' KPIs to identify four different types of town centres and suggests local policy initiatives for each town centre 'type'. The '*Town Centres Futures 2020*' ⁸report also suggests examples of innovative ways in which town centres can react to the challenges and changes they face. Examples from both reports include:

- Developing local policies that build on the unique character of the area;
- Encouraging markets and other temporary attractions to encourage local food and craft producers to trade in town centres;
- Promoting a balance of daytime and night time economy;
- Promoting the use of 'click and collect' points within the town centres to encourage footfall;
- Investing in shop front and public realm improvements;
- Introducing empty property initiatives eg. empty shop management orders;
- Supporting local businesses eg through favourable rents, pop-up businesses and short-term/seasonal schemes;

⁷ Businesses with business rates under a certain threshold are not eligible to pay the bid levy and do not have a vote.

⁸ Town Centres Futures 2020: an Experian marketing services white paper in partnership with the ATCM, September 2012.

- Investing in place branding and marketing; and
- Helping business to access finance.

5.38 Participants identified a range of activities that they had undertaken to attract retail businesses into town centres. Sam Neal spoke about Wood Street's indoor market which is council owned and had a 50% vacancy rate. The council offered a three month rent free period to retail businesses with a further three months at half price rent. Offering a short-term incentive period of reduced rent helped to attract businesses looking for a high street presence and showed the demand for small and affordable start-up space in the area. Stuart Fyfe said that Canary Wharf, which launched in the middle of a recession, had also offered inducements in the form of subsidised rents in order to attract businesses into the centre.

5.39 Sam Neal said that during the rent inducements period, new tenants in the Wood Street Indoor Market were also offered free Wi-Fi, water, heating, rates and rubbish collection. Waltham Forest Council supported the development of a bespoke website and use of social media to help promote the market. The new web and social media platforms helped to build a strong following and brought positive media attention, and contributed to positive perception of the area and increased local enthusiasm for the market.

5.40 Some participants warned that councils needed to be cautious about the amount of support they offered as it could end up being a double edged sword if businesses expected high-level ongoing support. Sam Neal agreed, and said that Waltham Forest had learned from the experience of Lambeth Council where businesses on Brixton High Street were offered a six month rent-free period then straight into full rent. That scheme was deemed to have failed because businesses had failed to adequately consider the impact of paying rent after the grace period would have on their cash flow.

In markets, a slightly different problem exists, where most markets in Tower Hamlets operate at near full capacity (when temporary traders are taken into account) but where new traders are accepted almost on a cab-rank principle. This means that there is little ability to actively curate the offer within individual markets to ensure that they continue to meet changing shopping habits and demographics, and that local visions may be achieved.

- **Recommendation 10:** Explore developing a package of inducements that could be offered to targeted businesses identified as essential in town centre visions
- **Recommendation 11:** Explore the viability of an approach whereby the Council will consider, in a small number of cases, taking on a short-term lease and grant-funding the fit-out to create a unit to market to specific retail uses identified as essential to the development of a local town centre vision
- **Recommendation 12:** Roll out the policy for accepting new traders into our markets to ensure that the retail offer within markets can be more actively curated

Promotion

- 5.41 Canary Wharf, Angel and Borough Market also have strong web and social media presence, including details on the retail offer and a 'what's on' guide of events. Some town centres in the Borough have created their own online presence, for example The Roman Road Resident and Business Association (RRRBA) which is run by a group of volunteers who also put on the Roman Road Festival, and run the Roman Road LDN website. The group also campaigns actively on planning issues and market management on Roman Road. Tower Hamlets Council promotes town centres through the weekly free newspaper East End Life, on the website and through social media @towerhamletsnow. The Economic Development team are also creating profile pages of the main town centres in the Borough on the Council's website. The information available will be about the services available, access routes, maps, festivals and events. There will also be links to individual websites, for example the RRRBA.
- 5.42 Shanaaz Carroll reported that the ATCM and National Skills Academy for Retail are working together to deliver a digital skills education project aimed initially at high street retail SMEs. The objective of the project is to fill the "Digital Divide" between small and large businesses, and to demonstrate that digital up-skilling could deliver economic and social results helping to revitalise town centres.

Engaging with landlords

- 5.43 One of the drivers for this review was the perception by some Members that there are too many vacant retail properties in the Borough's town centres. They felt vacant shop fronts did not help to foster a feeling of economic prosperity, and they felt that the Council could do more to engage with absentee, disengaged or obstructive landlords to bring them into the vision for retail-led regeneration.
- 4.44 Andy Scott reported that there is no lack of demand for retail properties in the Borough. The Borough's vacant business property rates of 8.6% across the Borough's major and district town centres compared to the national rate of 10.4% nationally⁹, occupation rates in the Borough are relatively high. Nonetheless, many good quality retail businesses that would benefit the offer of our high streets still struggle to find landlords willing to rent units to them and members were keen to investigate practical suggestions for dealing with those landlord who were absent or disengaged.
- 5.45 The ATCM '*100 Ways to help the High Street*' report suggests that many landlords would be open to taking an interest in the health of their town centre if for no other reason than that thriving town centres can be economically advantageous to the value of their property. The report suggests working with landlords to make empty units available for pop up uses, sometimes free of charge; offering shorter, flexible leasing arrangements; and visually enhancing vacant units to improve the look and feel of the property and surrounding area.
- 5.46 Christine Lovett acknowledged this issue as a major challenge in regenerating town centres – in Angel AIM area there are six major landlords and only around 10% landlord engagement. She said liaising with landlords was very important and said that perseverance in fostering good relationships was the key. She had had some successes where the Council had not because some

landlords in the town centre had a poor opinion and relationship with local authorities, with landlords often seeing LAs as too bureaucratic.

- 5.47 It was recognised however that some landlords sit on premises for a host of reasons, including seeing properties solely as an investment opportunity, for pension funds or in the hope of converting to residential which is more profitable. Andy Scott advised that although some shops look empty, they are in fact acting as warehouses or overflows for nearby shops. Participants agreed that whilst it is often impossible to engage with some landlords, working with accommodating landlords could act as a catalyst which can bring round the disengaged landlords.
- 5.48 Participants agreed that it was easier to regenerate a town centre with your own business property stock. In Tower Hamlets the portfolio of business property stock for which the Council is landlord is very small. Sam Neil agreed - one of the reasons Wood Street was chosen as a pilot for regeneration interventions was because the indoor market was owned by the Council. In the wider Wood Street town centre she works with landlords who have empty properties but are keen to fill them. Subject to meeting specific criteria, the Council undertakes a revamp of the shop front (or provides grant funding for landlords to do so themselves). In return, the landlord gives the space for free for a period of time for the Council to offer to new businesses and for trying out emerging markets.
- 5.49 With funding from the High Street Innovation Fund, Tower Hamlets Council established a pilot project – the Enterprising Town Centres Initiative (ETCI) - using resources from the High Street Innovation Fund (HSIF) allocation and Section 106 funding. The pilot project was intended to identify owners of vacant premises in Roman Road, and come to an agreement with them about consenting to meanwhile uses – that is, temporary tenancies - in those premises in order to bring them back into use. The “meanwhile” tenants would be people who would occupy part or all of the premises in running a business, preferably somebody who had not run a business previously from commercial premises. Roman Road was chosen as the location for the pilot project, as it is the town centre within the Borough with the highest level of high street commercial premises vacancies. The intention was to roll a project out to the Borough as a whole on the basis of the track record of the pilot project.
- 5.50 The deal offered was that the Council would take a short-term tenancy for two years or more, take on the burden of business rates and prepare the premises for temporary uses. The Council would pay a rent of up to 30% of the going commercial rate, depending on the physical state of the premises, and in turn let the property out to new-entrepreneur tenants.
- 5.51 Despite intensive efforts, and negotiations with a number of owners of vacant premises, the Council was unable to find takers for a deal of this nature. This indicates that, in Tower Hamlets at least, there is not really a problem of long-term vacancies: the vacancies which are seen in town centres may indicate premises in which there are in fact uses happening, or premises which are off the market as the owners are hoping to convert them into higher income generating uses (especially residential) or premises which are vacant only transitionally, as they await new commercial tenants.

5.52 Lessons learned from the ETCI pilot, which was terminated in March 2014, has accordingly led to a rethinking of how HSIF resources can best be used to support town centres in the Borough. Two initiatives are currently under consideration:

- 1) Establishing tools that can best be used to encourage owners of vacant high street retail premises to bring them back into use – that is, enforcement of planning regulations, where relevant, and the possibility of the Council using compulsory purchase powers as a last resort; and
- 2) Following the same principles as developed in the pilot project in Roman Road, but targeting non-retail commercial premises rather than retail premises. If vacant non-retail commercial premises are situated in or near a town centre in the Borough, meanwhile enterprise uses in those premises should help to improve economic conditions in that town centre.

5.53 A recent feature of town centre management in Tower Hamlets has been an accelerating trend in some town centres for landlords to apply to convert substantial portions of retail units into residential, with flats being built in basements and at the back of shops. Too often this results in retail units that are exceptionally hard to let for retail use because they are too small or oddly shaped, have lost part of their street frontage, or have little or no storage or service areas. Many of these retail units have remained empty subsequently, with the only viable use being office or service sector, further damaging the retail ecology of a town centre. Efforts to prevent these conversions have been hampered by the absence of town centre specific policies and data sets, including an SPD on retail unit viability.

- **Recommendation 13:** Finalise and formalise the Council's approach to proactively establishing and using tools to encourage owners of vacant high street retail premises to bring them back into use
- **Recommendation 14:** Identify and engage with absentee landlords to identify current premises use and explore options for alternative uses
- **Recommendation 15:** Convene a working group to identify how retail units may be protected through planning measures from unsuitable conversion as part of the Local Plan review
- **Recommendation 16:** Develop a retail unit viability study.

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
|---|---|---|------------|--|
| Recommendation 1: Develop a vision for each town centre that identifies the unique selling point and retail offer it needs to attract its target market | | | | |
| <p>Each commercial district will be explored to identify key indicators and any potential USP that can inform the development of a local vision, working with resident/community groups, businesses and ward councillors.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets Team</p> | Recruit staff resources to develop and deliver programme of work | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q3 2015/16 | <p>Good progress is being made in terms of meeting the Council's Strategic Plan objectives for this area of work. However, the NHB project 'Thriving High Streets' is providing the funding for this recommendation. While the funding for the project was agreed in 2014, the final agreement for signature was not received by LBTH until 13th June 2016. This delay has impacted on the delivery with the risk attached to commencing ahead of the funding agreement being finalised. In the meantime, however, appointments have been made to the Town Centre and High Streets Manager and the High Streets Manager on short term contracts all commencing in June 2016. This has enabled the development of a highly experienced team in a relatively short timeframe. These new posts join the existing Roman Road Town Centre Manager and Project Officer posts to complete the Town Centre team. Work has now commenced on pulling together the existing research, audits, information on District Centres to commence work on area profiles demonstrating commercial concentrations as destinations. Key indicators are being developed to underpin these area profiles. The requirements for procurement of the Strategy have been established - <i>and the Strategy is out for procurement to ensure that the key deadlines are met.</i> The pilot area/s for the pilot project are being analysed and proposal are being developed for further consideration. <i>Work is underway to link up with the Chrisp Street redevelopment led by Poplar HARCA and the Retail Capacity Study undertaken in Whitechapel. There is also active involvement in the refresh of the Local Plan to ensure that there is synergy between the Town Centre Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.</i></p> |
| | Overview research of local geographic town area including demographics and business make up. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | |
| | Develop offer for local resident/community groups to support development of town centre visions | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 15/16 | |
| | Initiate development of town centre visions in agreed priority locations | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Mar-16 | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
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| Recommendation 2: Promote the opportunity for local town teams to be formed by residents and businesses and put in place a toolkit to support this. Encourage these town teams to be engaged in the development of the local vision | | | | |
| <p>Local Town Teams can be in a varying degree of size and complexity. It is essential that local businesses form a key part of the discussions and proposals going forward to ensure that any business partnership is relevant to the area it represents.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets Team</p> | Develop a Toolkit package that local resident and business collectives can use to develop their business partnership. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>This work will be taken forward by the newly established Town Centre and High Streets team. Actions will be completed in Q3 and Q4 2016. <i>Work is currently underway to establish a Town Centre Manager position for Brick Lane. Networks are under development in the Brick Lane area and businesses are being consulted about their local issues and needs. Active business engagement is underway. It is proposed that the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum will be consulted as the Improvement Plan for the Brick Lane area emerges.</i></p> |
| | Introduce the Town Centre partnership work | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | |
| | Work with local residents, businesses and ward councillors to develop the work of local partnerships to identify any formal arrangements which may offer 'Town Team' or 'local business partnership' formation. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q3 16/17 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| <p>Recommendation 3: If feasible, develop a range of economic, environmental and social regeneration initiatives to attract footfall and spend, encourage new businesses, and support existing businesses into town centres – examples include:</p> <p>a) Support in initial establishment of websites and business associations/forums for marketing of the town centres to consumers and other enterprises;</p> <p>b) Continuation of the use of art, cultural activities and events to establish town centres as destinations, with a presumption on these being resident-led where possible, with support and technical assistance (ie in securing council licences and approvals) provided by the Council;</p> <p>c) Strategic, focussed grant programmes for shop front improvements which support the agreed vision and objectives of town centres;</p> <p>d) Pop up shops, stalls or kiosks which allow both the council and businesses to 'test the water'</p> <p>e) Explore the potential for ring-fencing future business rate growth from schemes like this to forward fund them</p> | | | | |
| <p>Developing the geographies will identify specific actions for an area. The generation of unique branding and marketing and advertising strategies will help local networks and partnerships to promote their messages and events. Whilst initiatives can be developed universally, where they are actually targeting will be more specific to the locality. This will be delivered through the High Street policy work and rolled out where appropriate</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, Enterprise team, Finance & Procurement Service</p> | As part of the Town Centre Pilot Programme, work with the local population to identify any local opportunity for art/cultural activity, events linked to local area or seasonal promotions; and support local partnerships to take ownership of the delivery with support from council officers to minimise bureaucracy. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | <p>The Roman Road Town Centre Manager has identified local opportunities for art / cultural activities in the Interact Hub and has worked with the Roman Road Trust on the Summer Festival. The outcomes from these pilots will be integrated into the Town Centre Pilot Programme. This work is now underway, delays in this work were due to the service restructure and the delayed contract from the GLA as identified above. Exploring the potential for ring-fencing future business rate growth to forward fund schemes like these will be considered as part of the outcomes based budgeting approach being used to deliver the medium term financial strategy which will ensure that resources are aligned with the council's strategic priorities. This will take place in Q3 2016/17.</p> |
| | Implement the new entrepreneur training, start-up project and shop-front improvement scheme as part of the ongoing GLA NHB top- slice programme of town centre investment all of which will support the identification of test trade workspace. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2016/7 | |

| | Identify forward requirement and requisite funding mechanism | Neville Murton, Finance & Procurement Service | Q4 2015/16 | |
|--|---|---|------------|---|
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 4: Develop a high streets and town centres policy which establishes a local vision, strategy and plan for town centres in the borough, focussed on economic regeneration as the central objective. Ensure that any update of the Town Centre Spatial Strategy, as part of the Local Plan refresh, takes the above into account | | | | |
| <p>The council is keen to identify and drive the economic growth in local commercial districts as well as the larger more corporate areas. A key part of this work is a defined high street and Town Centre policy which identifies the priorities for such areas and outlines the key actions being taken to promote increased performance.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, funding allocation from GLA New Homes Bonus-funded High Streets Policy Pilot Programme</p> | High Street policy developed with consultation across the council and with local businesses and residents. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | <p>Delays from the GLA in delivering the contracts have meant slippage in the implementation the NHB programme overall. Input of research and information on town centres and high streets into the data collection and analysis for the revised Local Plan refresh is currently underway. The findings will be used to inform the <i>Town Centre Strategy</i>. <i>Procurement of suitable consultants to undertake preparation of the Town Centre Strategy is now underway. The draft Strategy will be presented to Lead Member and senior leadership in early 2017 and to Cabinet by the end of the financial year.</i></p> |
| | Ensure the input of research and information on town centres and high streets into the data collection and analysis for the revised Local Plan refresh | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q2 2016/17 | |
| | Launch High Street /Town Centre Policy highlighting local good news stories and promoting the business partnerships involved and the latest events being planned. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources / Town Centre. Coordination, Steering Group | Q2 16/17 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 5: Adopt suitable town centre KPIs, starting with the ATCM model which measure the economic and wider health of our town centres | | | | |
| <p>As identified in discussion on local commercial areas, a baseline is required to identify where investment can most impact on the economic, social and environmental elements of an area. The Council would look to introduce indicators that can followed over time.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team</p> | Work with ATCM to adapt the indicator model if necessary for use in LBTH high streets and town centres | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources / Association of Town Centre Managers | Q1 2016/17 | <p><i>Exploration is underway of GLA Specialist Advisor panel funding to align the work that is underway in developing the Area Profiles of District Centres. Work is underway with ATCM to identify the indicator model to be used. The indicator model will be used to benchmark and performance manage the Town Centres going forward.</i></p> |
| | Create baseline scorecard/dashboard arrangement for key areas. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q2 2016/17 | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
|--|---|---|------------|--|
| Recommendation 6: Review role and responsibilities of the Roman Road Town Centre Manager post to ensure it is focussed on delivering the targeted interventions identified in the Roman Road Vision, and subject to funding, roll out for other town centres across the borough | | | | |
| <p>The Roman Road Town Centre manager role was introduced for a small focused project and to facilitate specific events. Town centre management functions will be reviewed following the adoption of the high streets and town centres policy to ensure they ongoing delivery requirements.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team. Roman Road town centre manager funded through S106 to March 2017.</p> | Develop and recruit to any Town Centre roles within Economic Development as part of the wider delivery of the GLA NHB Town Centres and High Streets programme | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | <p>Appointments have been made to the key Town Centre and High Streets team as identified above. The job description and person specification for a Town Centre Manager post was reviewed as part of the Economic Development restructure. This is now being reviewed as part of developing the job description for the upcoming Brick Lane position.</p> |
| | Review the Job Description and Person Spec of a Town Centre Manager to ensure it meets the delivery requirements of the programme going forward. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 7: Review the support available to local businesses in the borough and proactively promote it | | | | |
| <p>The council will identify and publicise the current support available, including GLA/NHB- funded provision, and promote any new programmes emerging through its work on Town Centres.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team.</p> | Review the programme of business support both internally available and the wider services available externally and increase promotion of the Council's business enquiries desk. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>Work is now underway on developing a new strategy around business engagement based around 'Business Friendly Tower Hamlets'. A database of businesses is being developed as part of the #Shoptowerhamlets project and this will be used to develop communications with and from local SME's. The workspace feasibility study has identified workspace providers who can be brought together to identify their offer and potential for future joint working. Promotion of business support through Council's business enquiries desk is ongoing. New business support programmes will deliver in early October 2016.</p> |
| | Link marketing and promotion of new programmes to the workspace and town centre delivery and make available to tenants in Council-owned commercial properties to ensure widest coverage possible. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q2 2016/17 | |
| | Introduce the LBTH entrepreneurship training and the business start up support programme | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 16/17 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 8: Provide data analysis that will stimulate potential opportunities in the borough's town centres, including qualitative and quantitative data, demographic analysis of the resident and working populations, outline existing market analysis, and external drivers for change | | | | |
| <p>Each town centre area will have a basic baseline set of data and indicators that can inform possible idea development and investment. With limited funding there needs to be a comparator to decide where to best invest council resources.</p> <p>Resource Implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, Enterprise team</p> | Develop basic individual area baseline and research sets | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>This work is being taken forward by the newly established Town Centre and High Streets team. Development of the Area Profiles has developed evidence base for all District Centres. The team has started to speak to other Boroughs and areas to identify good practice in these areas. Using the ATCM indicators model will enable performance management against these key indicators. The Town Centre Strategy will identify ideas around markets (as has already happened in the Whitechapel Retail Study) which will be pulled together into pilot programmes tailored to each area.</p> |
| | Research best practice and external examples of town centre development and change. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | |
| | Develop underserved market ideas, possibilities for full occupancy through test trading, street market expansion and increased footfall | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2016/17 | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
|--|--|---|------------|--|
| Recommendation 9: Explore the potential for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the borough and, where potential BID areas are identified, work in partnership with the business network to promote the business benefits to local enterprises, including the GLA's programme of support for future BIDs | | | | |
| <p>The Council is keen to support the development of Business Improvement Districts. There is very limited scope for wholly owned BID areas but early ideas are emerging around Aldgate and Shoreditch.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, Enterprise team</p> | Promote the appetite for Business Improvement Districts in the borough by immediately responding to 100% of all enquiries about potential BID's. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>Responses have been provided to 100% of all enquiries about potential BIDs. No requests for ballots have been received to date. <i>The Aldgate Partnership and Corporation of London is currently considering the potential of a BID for the Aldgate area. The Council is in on-going discussion to understand the process, identify any financial obligations and/or risks for the Council. Regular reports will be provided to the Lead Member to update on progress.</i></p> |
| | Discuss with agents and business networks an accurate geography for such districts and work within the legislation to ensure the council supports vote requests. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | |
| | Keep under review the latest support available for local businesses to develop BIDS | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Ongoing | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 10: Explore developing a package of inducements that could be offered to targeted businesses identified as essential in town centre visions | | | | |
| <p>A range of opportunities could be developed and would be determined by a number of factors including geography, outcome, market place, finance, risk.</p> <p>Resource Implications: Existing resources - Town Centres and High Streets Team, Enterprise Team</p> | Develop list of potential proposals | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>Proposals for incentivised retail uses are being developed in respect of Roman Road. <i>The Town Centre Strategy will pick up on these proposals and identify how they will be delivered in each area. Evaluation of any delivery will form part of future updates and will have a wider roll out to other Town Centres and High Streets.</i></p> |
| | Discuss opportunities at the strategic level. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - September 2016 |
| Recommendation 11: Explore the viability of an approach whereby the Council will consider, in a small number of cases, taking on a short-term lease and grant-funding the fit-out to create a unit to market to specific retail uses identified as essential to the development of a local town centre vision | | | | |
| <p>Resource Implications: Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, Enterprise team</p> | Develop a model for a short term lease and processes to identify and fill the property. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>Potential qualifying property has been identified in Roman Road. A model for short term lease and processes is in development. <i>The wider roll-out of similar aspects will be explored as part of the Town Centre Strategy. The findings of the Retail Capacity Study that underpins the refresh of the Local Plan also provides data on vacant units to enable work to proceed in Town Centres.</i></p> |
| | Identify any qualifying property | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - June 2016 |
|--|--|--|------------|---|
| Recommendation 12: Roll out the policy for accepting new traders into our markets to ensure that the retail offer within markets can be more actively curated | | | | |
| <p>There is already a policy for accepting new traders into the markets. Vendors are tested on their product knowledge, quality of goods, display technique, business plan etc. If successful a pre- allocated temporary license is issued.</p> <p>At present this policy relates only to fruit and vegetable traders and hot food; these vendors have been prioritised due the nature of the product.</p> <p>There is a risk that a lack of resources in the service will impact the roll out of this policy out to all traders.</p> <p>In addition, it should be noted there are currently negotiations with the Government to establish whether Markets are covered by the European Directive which removes the ability to refuse a trader because the intended goods are already represented.</p> <p>The actions to support this recommendation will be undertaken in line with the high streets and town centres policy and in keeping with local town centre visions.</p> <p>Resource implications: Existing resources – Market Development Team</p> | <p>Develop and publish a document which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlines the procedure for accepting new traders into markets; and • communicates the rationale for developing the offer within individual markets to ensure they meet shopping habits and demographics. | c/o David Tolley, Head of Trading Standards and Environmental Health | Q3 2015/16 | <p>Actions for this recommendation have not been progressed due to lack of staff resources. There will be capacity in the team going forward to resume this work which will be actioned over the course of the 2016/17 financial year.</p> <p>A procedure and interview criterion for accepting new traders into markets will be developed and cover areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample product produced at interview; • Photographs taken of product to ensure offered for sale at market; • Stall display conforms to Council requirements; • Temporary licence issued for a probationary period to ensure compliance of licence conditions; • Ability to withdraw if set criteria not complied with. |
| | Extend interview selection process to all potential market traders (prioritising those vendors selling food). | c/o David Tolley, Head of Trading Standards and Environmental Health | Q4 2015/16 | <p>Many markets within Tower Hamlets have new traders joining existing sellers, however the goods on offer are a duplication of those presently offered for sale resulting in commodity saturation. Many existing traders have sold the same commodity for many years and display in a very similar way to each other, we want to encourage them to look at alternative ways of selling their product, bringing variety, innovative ideas and change to create vibrant and successful markets attracting larger footfall from local people and visitors.</p> |
| | With support from the Economic Development Service, develop a mandatory training programme for successful applicants: which includes marketing, display, social media, and business skills, as a condition of being accepted for a temporary licence. | c/o David Tolley, Head of Trading Standards and Environmental Health | Q4 2015/16 | <p>With the introduction of the interview criteria for new traders and with support from Economic Development Service we aim to develop an optional training programme for successful applicants.</p> |
| | Develop mechanisms for monitoring probation periods including provision to withdraw temporary licenses if set criteria are not delivered. | c/o David Tolley, Head of Trading Standards and Environmental Health | Q3 2015/16 | <p>The suggestion is for new traders to attend training sessions to develop areas of business such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of produce; • Image/presentation of stall set-up; • Innovation – selling products different from others; • How to increase takings • Financial Planning; • Managing stock; • Managing accounts; • Social Media; • Adapting to changing demographics <p>Training Sessions cannot be made mandatory, we can only encourage traders to attend training sessions to advise of the benefits they will achieve to their business model. We aim to work with traders to ensure they operate effectively so that we can continue to develop markets as prosperous destinations.</p> |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - June 2016 |
|--|---|---|------------|---|
| Recommendation 13: Finalise and formalise the Council's approach to proactively establishing and using tools to encourage owners of vacant high street retail premises to bring them back into use | | | | |
| <p>There are already development management policies (DM1 and 2), which provide further guidance to assist with managing the provision of retail premises and seeking to prevent development resulting in the loss of such units.</p> <p>As part of the Local Plan preparation, officers will review the existing policies based on the most up-to-date evidence. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the ownership of vacant premises is not within the planning remit. The planning system cannot force owners to open units they own. Any grants/incentives would need to come from elsewhere.</p> <p>Resource implications: the cost of implementing</p> | <p>Review the existing development management policies based on new evidence base, including assessing town centre retail capacity</p> <p>Resource implications: the cost of implementing</p> | Adele Maher Strategic Planning Manager | Q4 2015/16 | <p>The first action is complete as schedule. The Second action is also on schedule and the draft Local Plan is anticipated to go out for public consultation in November 2016.</p> <p>With regard to the final action 'explore wider options for bringing vacant buildings back into suitable town centre use' the preparation of the new Local Plan will provide an opportunity for new policies to encourage vacant shops back into use, however, due to the limits to the planning system, this cannot be made a requirement. The appointment of the new High Street and Town Centres Team provides an exciting opportunity to further develop options for bringing vacant buildings back into use, in addition to existing economic development strategies. <i>Wider options are being developed including the use of CPO and enforcement action and the use of planning processes to bring vacant buildings back into use.</i></p> |
| | <p>Consult on the revised development management policies (above) during the public consultation on the draft Local Plan in autumn 2016</p> | Adele Maher Strategic Planning Manager | Q3 2016/17 | |
| | <p>Explore wider options for bringing vacant buildings back into suitable town centre use</p> <p>Resource implications: existing resources Economic Development</p> | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q3 16/17 | |
| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - June 2016 |
| Recommendation 14: Identify and engage with absentee landlords to identify current premises use and explore options for alternative uses | | | | |
| <p>Empty properties are key to the look and feel of a local high street but often this is impacted by properties in use. The council will explore uses and vacancies as part of its wider town centre development work.</p> <p>Existing resources – Town Centres and High Streets team, Enterprise team</p> | <p>Identify, generate and verify a list of properties that are apparently vacant or underused which could be explored and/or utilised.</p> | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q4 2015/16 | <p>A List of vacant / underused properties has been generated for Roman Road as a key area for commercial vacancies. Freeholders and landlords have been identified and contacted. Further engagement is now on-going.</p> <p>Work is now underway on developing a new strategy around business engagement based around 'Business Friendly Tower Hamlets'. A database of businesses is being developed as part of the #Shoptowerhamlets project and this will be used to develop communication.</p> |
| | <p>Identify freeholders and landlords associated with properties of interest to identify opportunities.</p> | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q1 2016/17 | |
| | <p>Agree shortlist of vacant properties and action plan for bringing back into use.</p> | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | Q2 16/17 | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - June 2016 |
|--|---|---|------------|---|
| Recommendation 15: Convene a working group to identify how retail units may be protected through planning measures from unsuitable conversion as part of the Local Plan review | | | | |
| <p>For the Local Plan, an internal stakeholder group at both officer level and service heads level has been established since June 2015. This arrangement has enabled planning policy officers to work collaboratively with the relevant teams on improving Town Centres related policies and understanding how amendments to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) have undermined existing policies and impacted town centre uses. There will continue to be engagement internally and with external stakeholders through the Local Plan consultation process.</p> <p>A more formal 'working group' could be considered, but there is a risk that a lack of resources in the service would have impact on the proposed arrangement.</p> <p>Resource Implications: The production of the Local Plan, its policies and the evidence base is supported by the input of an Internal Stakeholder Group of Senior Officers and an External Stakeholder group of key Stakeholders. This matter will be tabled for the groups' input to help ensure that the new Local Plan policies effectively address this issue. The work of these groups is supported by e existing Strategic Planning budget.</p> | Identify planning mechanisms and measures to protect retail units through internal and external Local Plan stakeholder groups. | Adele Maher Strategic Planning Manager | Q4 2014/15 | <p>The preparation of the new Local Plan has allowed these actions to be considered and actioned. The Draft Local Plan, that will be subject to a public consultation in November 2016 will be supported by this evidence. A programme has also been prepared to taking forward Article 4 Directions to protect retail units in our town centres. It is expected that this will be complete by summer 2017, and in line with nation legislation that this will be in force 12 months later in summer 2018. Evidence gathering as part of the Local Plan preparation has also identified better ways for information on on town centre uses to be better monitoring from summer 2016 onwards.</p> <p>Officers are currently gathering evidence on the loss of retail units to other uses through the Holistic Data Capture Project, led by colleagues in D&R, and through Retail and Town Centre evidence base that supports the new Local Plan. The initial outputs of this evidence will be known by the end of June 2016. This will allow officers to prepare an informed policy response to the loss of retail units. Options for taking this forward will be presented to the Internal Working Group in summer 2016, and are likely to include a new Local Plan policy and Article 4 Direction.</p> |
| | The groups will be supported by local evidence on the impact of change of use and permitted development rights on our town centres. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | | |
| | Officers will also consider the case for Article 4 Directions to be issued to restrict application of permitted development rights. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | | |
| | Officers to consider how loss of units can be better monitored in the future e.g. through regular town centre use surveys. | Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources | | |

| Comment | Action | Responsibility | Date | Progress Update - June 2016 |
|--|---|--|------------|--|
| Recommendation 16: Develop a retail unit viability study | | | | |
| <p>The key to the value of a retail property is usually the location. The Plan Making team is not aware of any guidance on what renders a retail unit as viable. The existing policy DM1.7 requires adequate width and depth of floor space for retail use, though this is not specifically defined in the policy. Further discussion can be held to discuss the scope of a retail unit viability study. This is to help plan making officers to understand the purpose and objectives of this study before any undertaking any actions.</p> <p>Resource Implications: this will be delivered through existing budgets</p> | Develop evidence base to establish suitable size, layout and servicing arrangements for different types of retail unit. Planning and Economic Development to draw together local evidence on suitable unit size, layout and viability to recommend best practice advice to support the development of the new Local Plan. | <p>Adele Maher Strategic Planning Manager</p> <p>Chris Holme, Economic Development & Resources</p> | Q3 2016/17 | <p>The preparation of the new Local Plan has allowed these actions to be considered and actioned. The Draft Local Plan, that will be subject to a public consultation in November 2016 will be supported by this evidence. A programme has also been prepared to taking forward Article 4 Directions to protect retail units in our town centres. It is expected that this will be complete by summer 2017, and in line with nation legislation that this will be in force 12 months later in summer 2018.</p> <p>Evidence gathering as part of the Local Plan preparation has also identified better ways for information on on town centre uses to be better monitoring from summer 2016 onwards.</p> <p><i>The development of the evidence base is progressing well with the development of the Area Profiles. Relevant officers from Planning and Economic Development are continuing to meet on a regular basis to ensure robust policy development for retail units.</i></p> |
| | Consult on revised planning policies as outlined in the response to recommendation 13 above. | Adele Maher, Strategic Planning Manager | Q3 2016/17 | |

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| <p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>1st September 2016</p> |  <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p> |
| <p>Report of: Melanie Clay, Corporate Director for Law, Probity & Governance</p> | <p>Classification: [Unrestricted or Exempt]</p> |
| <p>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17</p> | |

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| Originating Officer(s) | Kevin Kewin, Interim Service Head, Corporate Strategy & Equality |
| Wards affected | All wards |

Summary

This report sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) work programme for the municipal year 2016/17. The draft work programme has been informed by a session for committee members (including co-optees).

Also included are the draft work programmes for the Health, Housing and Grants Scrutiny Sub-committees.

Recommendations:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the work programmes included in the appendices.

1. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 1.1 A workplanning and induction session was held on 13th July, with all committee members invited, including co-optees. This was facilitated by officers, as well as an external consultant with considerable experience of training and development with Overview & Scrutiny members.
- 1.2 Packs were prepared and distributed in advance to each committee member. These consisted of:
 - An introductory guide to Overview & Scrutiny in Tower Hamlets
 - A review of performance against key measures set out in the Strategic Plan 2016/17
 - A briefing on the results of the 2016 Annual Residents' Survey, and
 - Briefings on each scrutiny lead portfolio, produced by directorate SPP teams with input from the corporate SPP team. These included:
 - a summary of services within the portfolio
 - key challenges and opportunities
 - performance information, perception and satisfaction data, and
 - items on the Forward Plan.
- 1.3 At the session, members of the committee received an overview from the Interim Service Head for Corporate Strategy & Equality of the main priorities of the council and the challenges it faces; and from the Interim Service Head for Legal Services on the committee's role, and its legal powers and responsibilities in performing this. An Expert Adviser for the Centre for Public Scrutiny also presented to the members present on key skills and approaches for effective Overview & Scrutiny.
- 1.4 Following this, members were given the opportunity to discuss and propose potential topics for the committee's work programme for the year in small groups, as well as potential formats in which these could be considered (excluding those areas covered by the remits of the Overview & Scrutiny sub-committees, ie health and adults' social care, housing and grants). All members present were then asked to indicate their relative preferences amongst these topics.
- 1.5 Subsequently to the session itself, the scrutiny lead members for CLC and the Children's Service, who were unavailable to attend, expressed views on other topics within their areas which they would like to explore.
- 1.6 The draft work programme for the committee at Appendix 1 has been developed broadly from those receiving the most member support in the session, with the addition of items suggested by members who were unable to attend, subject to confirmation by the committee.
- 1.7 Alongside these on the OSC work programme are items which are routinely included, such as the quarterly strategic performance and budget reports, the annual complaints and information governance report, and reporting on use of

covert surveillance powers. It also includes progress updates which are due on reviews and challenge session carried out in previous years, and items on which officers anticipate the committee would likely welcome the chance to comment (eg drafts of important strategies or policies). Please note that Appendix 1 also includes details of items considered at meetings which have already taken place.

1.8 For reference, format options other than traditional reports on committee agendas can broadly be defined as follows:

- spotlight sessions: a Cabinet member or the Borough Commander is questioned and held to account on a range pertinent issues within their remit. These need not be focused on a report.
- reviews: carried out by a portfolio scrutiny lead member individually, or as chair of a small panel, to examine a topic in-depth over multiple sessions, with a view to developing a report with recommendations for improvement. These are directly supported by an officer from Corporate Strategy & Equality, with input from relevant directorates.
- challenge sessions: similar to reviews, but with only one session and typically in slightly less depth.
- progress update on review or challenge session: reviewing progress against actions resulting from previous reviews and challenge sessions. Produced by an officer from Corporate Strategy & Equality, with input from relevant directorates.

The table below sets out all of the items on the draft work programme by directorate, as well as the format proposed.

| Lead Directorate | Topic | Format | Service lead |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Adults' Service | Adults charging policy* | Agenda item* | Luke Addams* |
| CLC | Substance Misuse Strategy | Agenda item | Andy Bamber |
| | Parking [†] | Challenge session [†] | Roy Ormsby [†] |
| | Annual Review of Community Safety Partnership Plan | Agenda item | Andy Bamber |
| | Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017-onwards | Agenda item | Andy Bamber |
| | Gambling Policy 2016/17 | Agenda item | David Tolley |
| | Cycling safety | Progress update | Roy Ormsby |
| | Reporting ASB | Progress update | Andy Bamber |
| | Prevent** | Review** | Andy Bamber** |
| | Community Languages | Agenda item | Shazia Hussain |
| | Crime and disorder | Spotlight | Andy Bamber |

| Lead Directorate | Topic | Format | Service lead |
|---------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| D&R | Open Space Strategy | Agenda item | Shazia Hussain |
| | Night-time economy | Review | David Tolley |
| | Integrated Employment Service | Agenda item | Chris Holme |
| | Town Centres | Progress update | Chris Holme |
| | Civic Centre Cross-party Reference Group | Agenda items (2) | Ann Sutcliffe |
| | Business engagement with the community | Agenda item | Chris Holme |
| Children's Services | Local Plan | Agenda item | Owen Whalley |
| | Youth Service | Spotlight (already carried out); challenge session | Ronke Martins-Taylor, Claire Belgard |
| | Council support for free schools | Agenda item | TBC |
| | Literacy | Progress update | Christine McInnes |
| | Post-16 education | Agenda item | Christine McInnes |
| | THE Partnership | Agenda item | Christine McInnes |
| LPG | Outcomes for children in care | Agenda item | Nasima Patel |
| | Quarterly strategic performance report | Agenda items (4) | Kevin Kewin |
| | Complaints and Information Governance Annual Report | Agenda item | Graham White |
| | Reporting use of covert surveillance | Agenda item | Graham White |
| | OSC Annual Report | Agenda item | Kevin Kewin |
| Resources | Quarterly budget report | Agenda items (4) | Neville Murton |
| | Contract management | Progress update | Neville Murton |
| | Budget | Agenda items (2 or 3, TBC) | Zena Cooke |
| Cross-cutting | Welfare reform | Spotlight | Various |

* This item required Overview & Scrutiny input into a consultation. Though it pertained to an area generally under the remit of the Health Scrutiny Sub-committee, the consultation was scheduled to end before that sub-committee's next meeting, and so this was considered by the main OSC.

** The Prevent review commenced under the previous year's committee, and the final report will be considered by the current committee. This does not indicate a new review.

[†] This item, and the format in which it should be considered by the committee, has been proposed outside of the committee's workplanning session, and is subject to confirmation by the committee.

- 1.10 Consideration of budget proposals has been scheduled for the late September meeting, and Committee members will also be offered training and development to help them take advantage of this important element in council's the budget-setting process. The usual extraordinary meetings for budget scrutiny in January and (provisionally) February remain in the committee's calendar.
- 1.11 The committee has expressed the desire to maintain spare capacity for the time being, so that other items can be added as the year progresses, as well as allowing for potential call-ins. In addition, the officer resource entailed in supporting the committee's work must be taken into account, particularly in a climate of reducing resources. For these reasons, prioritisation of topics has been required, and some of those discussed by the committee have not been included. These include some which have been considered in-depth in the recent past, or where the information likely to be requested by the committee is not yet available.
- 1.13 Along with the OSC and Health Scrutiny Sub-committee, the council's Overview & Scrutiny function now encompasses two further sub-committees, focusing on housing (chaired by the OSC lead member for Development & Renewal) and the award of grants (chaired by the OSC lead member for Resources). The council is therefore subject to greater overall scrutiny than previously, with the new sub-committees facilitating greater time and resource to be dedicated to these two areas, and releasing time for the main OSC to consider other areas.
- 1.14 The Housing and Health Scrutiny Sub-committees have each held workplanning sessions, and developed their own proposed programmes for the year. As with the OSC work programme, these are initial proposals, and subject to discussion with managers and service heads before being finalised. These are set out in Appendices 2 (Health Scrutiny Sub-committee) and 3 (Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee).
- 1.15 The Grants Scrutiny Sub-committee's work programme (Appendix 4) currently includes primarily pre-decision scrutiny items, though it is understood that these will likely be added to as the year progresses.

2. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 2.1 This report provides the work programme for OSC for 2016/17. The work programme will be delivered through existing resources and thus there are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

3. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 3.1 Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 requires authorities to set up an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a strategic and co-ordinating role over the Council's scrutiny function and in that regard, the Committee sets its own work programme.

4. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Reducing inequality, promoting community cohesion and enabling community engagement and leadership have informed many of the topics included in the draft OSC work programme, including the adults charging policy, community languages, the Youth Service, outcomes for children in care, and welfare reform.

5. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The work programme is developed to help the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's carry out its role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the council, as required under its Best Value duty, including through scrutinising performance.

6. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report or recommendations, although the OSC is likely to consider items pertaining to the environment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

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

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme 2016/17

- Appendix 2: Health Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17
- Appendix 3: Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17
- Appendix 4: Grants Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17

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

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

- N/A

Appendix 1: Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme 2016/17

| Meeting date | Spotlight/agenda items | Lead officer | Cabinet Member | OSC Lead Member |
|--------------|--|--|---|--|
| 7Jun 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reset of the Commercial Contract with Agilisys for the Provision of ICT Services to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets – Pre-decision scrutiny Public Health Savings – Phase 1 Community Engagement Strategy Homelessness Scrutiny Challenge Session | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zena Cooke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdul Mukit |
| 21 July 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q4 performance monitoring Q4 budget monitoring Substance Misuse Strategy Spotlight on Youth Service Adult social care charging policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kevin Kewin Neville Murton Rachel Sadegh Ronke Martins-Taylor & Claire Belgard Luke Addams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Biggs David Edgar Shiria Khatun Rachael Saunders Amy Whitelock-Gibbs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Pierce Abdul Mukit Abdul Asad Julia Dockerill Clare Harrisson |
| 1 Sept 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime and disorder spotlight Progress update on Town Centres review Integrated Employment Service O&S work programme Budget process Appointment of co-opted members for Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borough Commander, Chris Holme Chris Holme Afazul Hoque Neville Murton Afazul Hoque | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shiria Khatun Josh Peck Josh Peck David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdul Asad Amina Ali (Josh Peck)* Amina Ali John Pierce Abdul Mukit Amina Ali |

| | | | | |
|--------------|--|---|---|--|
| 28 Sept 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent review report Q1 performance monitoring Q1 budget monitoring Gambling Policy 2016/17 Community Safety Partnership Annual Review of Plan 2013-17 Budget Scrutiny | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shazia Ghani Kevin Kewin Neville Murton David Tolley Shazia Ghani Zena Cooke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shiria Khatun John Biggs David Edgar Ayas Miah Shiria Khatun David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Pierce John Pierce Abdul Mukit Abdul Asad Abdul Asad Abdul Mukit |
| 26 Oct 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Plan Complaints and Information Governance Annual Report Progress update on Cycling Safety challenge session Progress update on ASB review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owen Whalley Graham White Roy Ormsby Rachel Sadegh & Shazia Ghani | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachel Blake Ayas Miah Shiria Khatun | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amina Ali John Pierce John Pierce |
| 30 Nov 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Centre Cross-Party Reference Group update Welfare reform spotlight Community languages Progress update on Contracts challenge session Progress update on Literacy review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ann Sutcliffe Kevin Kewin Shazia Hussain Neville Murton Terry Parkin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave Chesterton** Sirajul Islam Rachael Saunders David Edgar Rachael Saunders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amina Ali Abdul Asad Abdul Mukit (Abjol Miah)* Julia Dockerill (Denise Jones)* |
| 4 Jan 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting use of covert surveillance Q2 performance monitoring Q2 budget monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graham White Kevin Kewin Neville Murton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Biggs David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Pierce Abdul Mukit |
| 23 Jan 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Scrutiny | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zena Cooke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdul Mukit |
| 1 Feb 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes for children in care THE Partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nasima Patel Christine McInnes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachael Saunders Rachael Saunders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Julia Dockerill Julia Dockerill |

| | | | | |
|-------------|--|---|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council support for free schools • Post-16 education • Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017-onwards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC • Christine McInnes • Shazia Ghani | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachael Saunders • Rachael Saunders • Shiria Khatun | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julia Dockerill • Julia Dockerill • Abdul Asad |
| 13 Feb 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Scrutiny (provisional) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zena Cooke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abdul Mukit |
| 1 Mar 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space Strategy • Business engagement with the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shazia Hussain • Chris Holme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayas Miah • Josh Peck | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abdul Asad • Amina Ali |
| 29 Mar 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q3 performance monitoring • Q3 budget monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Kewin • Neville Murton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • David Edgar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Pierce • Abdul Mukit |
| 26 Apr 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Centre Cross-Party Reference Group update • OSC Annual Report • Night time economy review report • Youth service challenge session report • Parking[†] challenge session report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ann Sutcliffe • David Tolley • Claire Belgard, Ronke Martins-Taylor • Roy Ormsby[†] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Chesterton** • Ayas Miah • Rachael Saunders • Ayas Miah[†] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amina Ali • John Pierce • Abdul Asad • Julia Dockerill • Abdul Asad |

* Former OSC lead members are invited for progress updates on past reviews and challenge sessions they led (included in brackets where applicable). If they are not available, the current OSC lead will present this.

** Cllr Chesterton is the chair of this reference group, rather than a Cabinet member.

[†] The subject of this challenge session has been proposed outside of the committee's workplanning session, and is subject to confirmation by the committee.

Appendix 2: Health Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17

Key

| | |
|---|---|
| Access to health and social care | Agenda item relates to the Health Scrutiny theme of access to health and social care |
| Reason for choosing the theme of access to health and social care | Access to health and social care services is a pressing concern at both a national and a local level, and it is set to be exacerbated by a number of factors. |

Work Programme

| Meeting | Agenda | Outcomes | Lead Officer | Method |
|--|--|--|---|---------------------|
| Tuesday, 6th September, 2016 Page 83 | Setting the scene. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on access to health & social care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect community intelligence on the theme of access to health & social care. Understand the key issues restricting service access to health and social care services are. | Healthwatch CCG | Report/Presentation |
| | Role of Community Pharmacies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the role of community pharmacies and where they fit in the health care system. Develop an understanding of the proposed cuts to community pharmacy funding and the impact this will have on the community. Develop an understanding of how the pending changes to prescribing and the impact this will have. | Somen Banerjee (LBTH Public Health) | Report/Presentation |
| Wednesday, 2nd November, 2016 | Early years and access to care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early interventions improving outcomes for 0-5 year olds. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the issues impacting access to health and social care for 0-5 year olds. Form recommendations to improve access to health and social care services for 0-5 year olds. | Debbie Jones (LBTH Children's Services) | Report/Presentation |
| | Refreshing Commissioning Prospectus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Tower Hamlets CCG Commissioning Prospectus to develop an understanding of their key priorities and commissioning activities. | Jane Milligan (CCG) | Report/Presentation |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how CCG commissioning fits in with Transforming Services Together and the North East London Sustainability and Transformation Plan. | | |
| Tuesday, 17th January, 2017 | Older years and access to care Early interventions improving outcomes for 65+ year olds. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the issues impacting access to health and social care for 65+ year olds. Form recommendations to improve access to health and social care services for 65+. | Denise Radley (Adults Services) | Report/Presentation |
| | Carers Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the implementation of the new Carers Strategy following health Scrutiny Review in 2015. Measure how effectively the recommendations from the review have been implemented. | Karen Sugars (LBTH Service Head Commissioning and Health) | Report/Presentation |
| Tuesday, 14th March, 2017 | Planning and GPs/health infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how significant increases in the population and number of new homes impact on health services Review the Local Plan to help form an understanding of the relationship between housing and health and social care. | CCG (Housing Scrutiny link in) | Report/Presentation |
| | Bart's Health & East London Foundation Trust Quality Account | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and provide feedback to the Barts Health Trust and ELFT Quality Accounts. | Barts Health Trust ELFT | Report/Presentation |

| | Scrutiny Review and/or Challenge Session | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Topic | Scope | Date |
| Access to and effectiveness of, our | <u>Description</u> | <i>TBC</i> |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| re-ablement service | <p>This is an area which is seen as critical to sustainable adult social care as it helps people to get back on their feet and regain the skills so that they can live independently or with little support.</p> <p>The service is in-house and there is a good evidence base nationally. However, LBTH benchmark poorly in terms of the numbers of people discharged from hospital who receives the service and also the effectiveness of our service (measured by the number of people who receive it and don't require further care).</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise the performance of the re-ablement service and make recommendations to improve the number of people who use the service and the effectiveness of the service for service users. • Understand the reasons for the poor performance of the service in LBTH. • Analyse what has worked nationally and how this can be adapted in LBTH • Feed findings into the current review of the service undertaken by Impower. | |
|---------------------|--|--|

| Site Visits | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Location | Outcome | Date |
| New Maternity Co-Location Unit at Royal London Hospital | <p>Visit the Midwife Lead Unit at the Royal London Hospital on the invitation of the Chief Executive, Alwen Williams Bart's Health Trust.</p> <p>Follow up on the recommendations of the scrutiny review focusing on maternity services at the Royal London Hospital.</p> | December 2016 / January 2017 |

In addition to the above, Cllr Clare Harrison has agreed to Chair the Inner North East London Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (INEL JOSOC) comprising of London Boroughs: Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and City of London Corporation. The Committee's remit is to consider London wide and local NHS service developments and changes that impact all the authorities mentioned above.

Appendix 3: Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17

| Date of Meeting | Item of business | Lead Officer | Detail |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 18 July | Work programme for the Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee | Mark Bursnell | Identify key topics that have an impact on some of the challenging issues facing the borough and which fulfil the ambitions of the Sub-committee |
| | Affordability Commission | Jackie Odunoye | Report on the conclusions reached by the Commission and establish how these impact on the work of the Sub-committee |
| | Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Report | Chief Executive, Tower Hamlets Homes | Consider the options for how the council meets the needs of its leaseholders and provides services at competitive charges in future |
| | Implications of the new Housing and Planning Act 2016 | Jackie Odunoye | Gain an understanding of how the provisions of the Act will impact on the council's housing policy and its relationship with tenants |
| 10 October | Spotlight session- Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Performance | Jackie Odunoye | Cabinet Member will set out the council's policies around the key issues within their portfolio |
| | Comments on the draft Housing Strategy | Jackie Odunoye | Opportunity for Members on the Sub-committee to comment and input into the development of this key strategy |

| Date of Meeting | Item of business | Lead Officer | Detail |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| | Registered Social Landlord first quarterly performance report (April-June 2016) | Jackie Odunoye | Consider the relative performance of the borough's main housing providers across a spectrum of performance indicators. Make proposals for improvement based on the comparative data included in the report |
| | Progress update on quality of s106-funded housing challenge session | Jackie Odunoye/ Owen Whalley | Review progress against action plan drafted in response to previous challenge session |
| 5 December | Question time session-Invitation to the public to attend a session where Cabinet Members and several of the big RSLs in the borough address key topics raised by the public | Jackie Odunoye | Cabinet Members and senior managers from large local housing providers will address and answer questions on a variety of issues. There will be a special focus on how efficient housing providers in the borough are in dealing with outstanding repairs. The purpose of the event is to give tenants and the public the opportunity to raise key housing issues and improve transparency |
| 6 February | Spotlight Session- Cabinet Member for Strategic Development | Jackie Odunoye | Cabinet Member will set out the council's policies around the key issues within their portfolio |

| Date of Meeting | Item of business | Lead Officer | Detail |
|-----------------|--|----------------|--|
| | Report on the progress being made in establishing a Council Housing Company to develop suitable sites and build new homes for social renting, to reduce the council's housing waiting. The report will include key milestones such as when the company becomes operational and starts to build new homes. The opportunities for acquiring development land outside the borough in outer London or South-East England and the options for the most appropriate delivery vehicle, for example creating a joint company with a preferred partner (another local authority or RSL) or setting up a wholly owned council company. | Jackie Odunoye | The report will examine relevant progress in establishing the Council Housing Company, the options available to use existing legal powers to set up different types of company and identify which vehicle is most appropriate to meeting the council's aspirations |
| | Registered Social Landlord second quarterly performance report (July-September 2016) | Jackie Odunoye | Consider the relative performance of the borough's main housing providers across a spectrum of performance indicators |
| 24 April | Report on the impact of new housing developments on those communities experiencing the highest rates of growth | Jackie Odunoye | The report will identify where these development pressures are most acute, their impact on local communities and proposals that might ameliorate the worst effects of this development |

| Date of Meeting | Item of business | Lead Officer | Detail |
|-----------------|--|----------------|---|
| | Report on the future status of the council's arms-length housing provider- Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) | Jackie Odunoye | The report will consider the options and potential for bringing THH back in-house |
| | Spotlight Session- Provision of services for elderly tenants. Working with Adult Services identify what support is available for elderly tenants to remain living at home in their community. Does the council provide enough choice and does it need to up its offer so the best bespoke option is available to all tenants | Jackie Odunoye | This Session will give stakeholders the opportunity to express their views on the best way forward for elderly tenants. Based on what's available currently and what is achievable with the resources available |
| | Report on the council's relationship with the private rented sector and the potential to introduce a landlord accreditation scheme based on the existing Tower Hamlets pilot | Jackie Odunoye | This type of tenancy is now the most popular in the borough and growing rapidly, so should more be done to improve the support the council provides for private sector tenants |
| | Registered Social Landlord third quarterly performance report (October- December 2016) | Jackie Odunoye | Consider the relative performance of the borough's main housing providers across a spectrum of performance indicators |

Also a Scrutiny Review on tackling under-occupancy of council homes to release extra capacity will take place.

Appendix 4: Grants Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2016/17

| Meeting date | Spotlight/agenda items | Lead officer |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| 21 st Sept 2016 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the Grants Scrutiny sub-committee 2. Pre-decision scrutiny of Commissioners Decision Making meeting 27th September: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSG Quarterly Monitoring Report • Exercise of Commissioners Discretion • Resolution of Grants Payments: Children's Services (educational maintenance awards) • Tower Hamlets Education Partnership • MSG Cohesion Grant Funding – how it will be commissioned • Grants Forward Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afazul Hoque / Steve Hill • Steve Hill / Zena Cooke • Steve Hill • Terry Parkin • Kate Bingham • Emily Fieran-Reed • Steve Hill |
| 2 nd Nov | Pre-decision scrutiny of Commissioners Decision Making meeting 8 th | |

| Meeting date | Spotlight/agenda items | Lead officer |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 2016 | November: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Fund applications • MSG Quarterly Monitoring Report • Exercise of Commissioners Discretion • Grants Forward Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shazia Hussain • Steve Hill / Zena Cooke • Steve Hill • Steve Hill |
| 14 th Dec 2016 | <i>No items scheduled</i> | |
| 8 th Feb 2017 | Pre-decision scrutiny of Commissioners Decision Making meeting 14 th February: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning for 2 Year Olds • Early Years Non-statutory Grant Funding • Event Fund Applications • Incentives to Tackling Overcrowding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terry Parkin • Terry Parkin • Shazia Hussain • Jackie Odunoye |
| 22 nd March 2017 | <i>No items scheduled</i> | |
| 3 rd May 2017 | <i>No items scheduled</i> | |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 September 2016</p> |  |
| <p>Melanie Clay, Director of Law, Probity & Governance</p> | <p>Classification: Unrestricted</p> |
| <p>Recruitment of two (2) independent co-opted representatives to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee</p> | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Originating Officer(s) | Mark Bursnell, Senior Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer |
| Wards affected | All wards |

Summary

The report sets out the process for recruiting two (2) independent, resident co-opted representatives to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the municipal years 2016/17-2017/18.

Recommendations:

1. Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to agree the appointment of the two (2) independent co-opted representatives onto the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee as detailed in paragraph 1.2.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9th May 2016 authorised that two (2) external independent co-opted representatives be appointed to the new Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee. The Committee agreed that one (1) of these co-opted members should be a tenant and the other a leaseholder. Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that these vacancies should be filled through a competitive recruitment process, so as many eligible local residents as possible could apply for these positions. The aim was to ensure that well qualified and experienced candidates were recruited, who might not previously have had direct contact with the Council or its key partners.
- 1.2 An advert, promoting the two (2) positions, was put on the Council's website on 29th June. The positions were also advertised through social media. Nine (9) requests for applications were received, but only four (4) completed applications were submitted. All of the received applications were of a sufficient quality to justify an interview. The interviews were held on 4th August by an interview panel chaired by Councillor Amina Ali, the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and officers. As a result of the interviews two (2) candidates were selected. Mr Moshin Ahmad Hamim as the leaseholder representative and Ms Anne Elizabeth Ambrose as the tenant representative. In order that these co-opted representatives are able to attend the next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 10th October their appointment needs to be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3 Training will be provided by Legal Services to the co-opted representatives on the Code of Conduct for Members which will include declarations of interest, exempt reports and data protection. An induction session will also be held to explain their role and how this can be developed.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee authorised the recruitment of the two (2) co-opted vacancies through an open, competitive route. An alternative that was considered, but rejected, involved directly appointing the co-opted members from an established housing scrutiny or engagement forum familiar to the Council.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9th May agreed to establish the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and delegate its housing responsibilities and functions to this Sub-Committee. The terms of reference of the Sub-Committee and its membership were also agreed at the same meeting, as was the decision to appoint the two vacant co-opted positions through an open competitive process.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 This report provides an update on the selection of two independent co-opted representatives for the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to endorse the candidates selected. The only financial implication as a result of the recommendation within this report is to note that each co-opted representative is entitled to claim an attendance allowance of £123 per meeting.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 Pursuant to section 9FA(4) and (5) of the 2000 Act, an overview and scrutiny committee of a local authority, or any sub-committee of such a committee, may include persons who are not members of the authority but any persons who are not members of the local authority are not entitled to vote at any meeting of its overview and scrutiny committee, or any sub-committee of such a committee.
- 5.2 Rule 3.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for approving co-opted representatives for the Scrutiny Panels (and which includes Sub-Committees). This report is asking for the Committee to approve the appointment of two (2) co-opted representatives to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and such request is within the Committees powers. Until such time as the Committee approves the appointment, the co-opted representatives cannot sit on the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- 5.3 When taking action, 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 do not (the public sector equality duty). Matters relevant to this duty are set out in the One Tower Hamlets section of the report.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The open, competitive recruitment process was designed to encourage applicants from a broad range of different backgrounds and interests within the local community. This is consistent with the aim of recognising and promoting the Council's equality duty. The appointment of co-opted members also brings local people's views to the committee's meetings and will help strengthen local community leadership.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The recruitment of two co-opted members, with experience of work outside of local government, will encourage a wider ranging debate to occur regarding how the Council secures Best Value and looks at different ways of managing services and working with partners.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 The direct experience of co-opted members who live in the Borough and are engaged with their local community will contribute to discussions around the Greener Environment. An example could be protecting green public space, especially in areas of high housing density.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no obvious implications for risk management arising from the appointment of the co-opted members.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct crime and disorder reduction implications arising from this report.

Officer contact details for documents:

- Farhana Zia 02073640842