

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Board</p> <p>Monday 14 January 2019</p>	
<p>Report of: Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Implementing Health Impact Assessments Policy in Tower Hamlets</p>	

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<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>Borough-wide</p>

Executive Summary

Health Impact Assessments provide a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population. Ensuring issues are identified, assessed, and mitigated and considered at an early stage in developing planning proposals can help to improve both the physical and mental health of the population.

Tower Hamlets has developed a Health Impact Assessments Policy within our emerging local plan to consider whether a development proposal might reinforce health inequalities and inadvertently damage people's health, or actually have positive health outcomes for the local community and establish measures to mitigate poor health outcomes and enhance positive outcomes.

This paper provides an overview of:

1. The alignment between spatial planning and health
2. Healthy Places and Health Impact Assessments
3. Local Plan Policy and Health Impact Assessments
4. Implementing the Local Health Impact assessments Policy

Recommendations:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Note and endorse the direction of travel for the Health Impact Assessment Policy.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Tower Hamlets' Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes the recommendation that we should 'make health impact assessment core to policy decisions across the partnership' including 'developing a process to ensure that the impacts on health and wellbeing made by major developments are routinely assessed and considered in planning decisions'.
- 1.2 Tower Hamlet's emerging Local Plan has adopted Health Impact Assessment Policy.
- 1.3 This policy seeks to ensure development contributes towards a healthy built environment. Developments containing those use which are most likely to impact health outcomes, or are in locations which may impact on health outcomes, are required to undertake a health impact assessment.
- 1.4 This paper sets out the direction of travel for delivering against this emerging policy.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

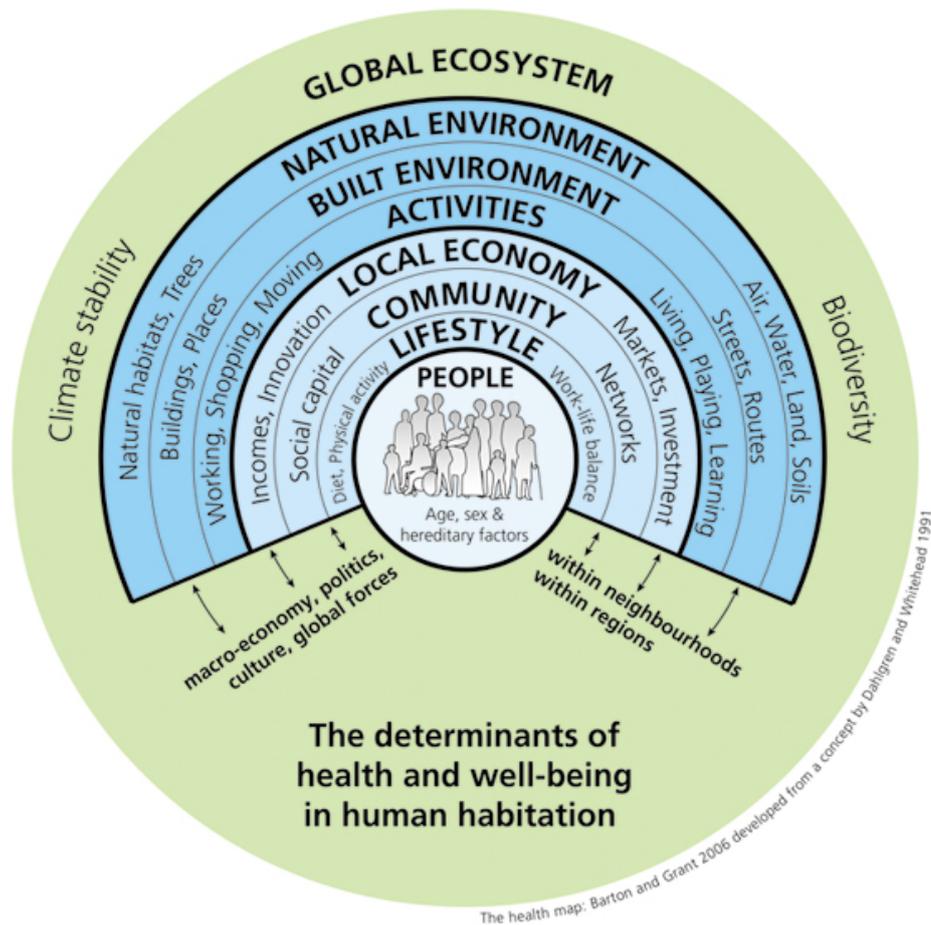
- 2.1 This paper demonstrates how Tower Hamlets intends to deliver against the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020 and therefore no alternative options have been considered.
- 2.2 If we chose to do nothing we would miss the opportunity to maximise health improvement and reduce health inequalities through the built environment.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Spatial Planning and Health

- 3.1 Tower Hamlet's Local Plan will set out a vision, strategic priorities and a planning policy framework to guide and manage development in the borough for the next 10 to 15 years, in line with the planning policy requirements set out by national and regional government.
- 3.2 Together with the London Plan, the Local Plan is a critical tool for a planning authority to plan proactively and positively for development by focusing on the community needs and opportunities in relation to places, housing, economy, infrastructure, local services and other areas. It also seeks to safeguard the environment, adapt to climate change and enhance the natural and historic environment.
- 3.3 In recent years evidence has accumulated which reinforces just how important the physical, social and economic environment in which we live and work is for our health. Studies looking at the contribution to overall health of different factors estimate environment and socio-economic factors contributing 60% whilst healthcare only accounts for up to 25%.

- 3.4 The Marmot review to address health inequalities had as one of its six strategic priorities to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities. The relationship between health and wellbeing in relation to local neighbourhoods is represented in the follow diagram.



Healthy Places and Health Impact Assessments

- 3.5 The Tower Hamlets' Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes the recommendation that we should 'make health impact assessment core to policy decisions across the partnership' including 'developing a process to ensure that the impacts on health and wellbeing made by major developments are routinely assessed and considered in planning decisions'.
- 3.6 Health Impact Assessments are defined by the World Health Organisation as 'a combination of procedures, methods, and tools used to evaluate the potential health effects of a policy, programme or project... to produce recommendations that will help decision-makers and other stakeholders make choices about... improvements to prevent disease/injury and to actively promote health'. The process of Health Impact assessments has been cited by the Local Government Association as a useful tool for assessing the health impacts of policies, programmes and interventions in order to enhance positive and mitigate against negative health impacts.

- 3.7 Health Impact assessments provide a systematic approach for assessing the potential impacts of development on the social, psychological and physical health of communities. Ensuring issues are considered at an early stage in developing planning proposals can help to improve both the physical and mental health of the population. Health Impact assessments are designed to consider whether a development proposal might reinforce health inequalities and inadvertently damage people's health, or actually have positive health outcomes for the local community.
- 3.8 Health Impact assessments promotes sustainable developments that support the creation of strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by:
- Considering both the positive and negative health impacts when preparing development proposals,
 - Identifying and taking action to minimise any negative impacts on health and wellbeing of a particular development scheme
 - Enabling developers to work alongside communities affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community.
 - Taking into account the cumulative impact of development, i.e. where several developments are in progress within the local area, as well as potential overconcentration of uses in a local area.
- 3.9 A Health Impact Assessment can be prospective, concurrent , or retrospective. A prospective assessment provides the opportunity to influence development proposals and decision-making.
- 3.10 The London Healthy Urban development Unit (HUDU) describes three types of health impact assessment:
- A 'desktop' assessment which draws on existing knowledge and evidence, often using published checklists which provide a broad overview of potential health impacts
 - A 'rapid' assessment, which is a more resource intensive process, involving a more focused investigation of health impacts and recommending mitigation and enhancement measure
 - A 'full' assessment which involves comprehensive analysis of all potential health and wellbeing impacts, which may include quantitative and qualitative information, data from health needs assessments, reviews of the evidence base and community engagement
- 3.11 The Health Impact Assessment process has 6 key stages:
- Screening (identifying plan, project, or policy decisions for which an Health Impact assessments would be useful).
 - Scoping (planning the Health Impact assessments and identifying what health risks and benefits to consider).
 - Assessment (identifying affected populations and quantifying health impacts of the decision).
 - Recommendations (suggesting practical actions to promote positive health effects and minimize negative health effects).

- Reporting (presenting results to decision makers, affected communities, and other stakeholders).
- Monitoring and evaluation (determining the Health Impact assessments's impact on the decision and health status).

Local Plan Policy and Health Impact Assessments

3.12 Tower Hamlets has recommended in the emerging Local Plan to adopt the following policy:

"1. The following developments are required to complete and submit a health impact assessment as part of the planning application.

1.A Major development within an area of sub-standard air quality

B Developments which contain any of the following uses:

- i. Education facilities.*
- ii. Health facilities.*
- iii. Leisure or community facilities.*
- iv. A5 uses (hot-food-takeaways).*
- v. Betting shops.*
- vi. Publicly accessible open space.*

2. Developments of a scale referable to the Greater London Authority (as set out in legislation) are required to complete and submit a detailed health impact assessment as part of the planning application."

3.13 This policy seeks to ensure development contributes towards a healthy built environment. Development's containing those uses which are most likely to impact health outcomes or are in locations which may impact on health outcomes are required to undertake a health impact assessment.

3.14 Examination of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan was conducted in recent months and we are awaiting comments and formal sign-off of this policy from the Planning Inspectorate in 2019.

Implementing Local Health Impact assessments Policy

3.15 Public Health is taking the following steps to oversee implementation of the policy in partnership with planning colleagues:

- Established a Council wide working group, represented by Public Health, Development Planning, Planning Policy, Place Shaping, Capital Delivery, Open Space and Environmental Health
- Developing a training programme to enhance awareness and education of developing and interpreting Health Impact assessments
- Developing a suite of Local Area Profiles to enable partners to understand the health needs of local communities
- Developing a localised set of tools to enable officers and developers to conduct Health Impact Assessments in line with local policy

- Developing a Health Impact Assessment Officer role as a shared post between Public Health, Environmental Health and Development Planning to lead the new Health Impact assessments Work Programme and implementation of the emerging Policy.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Scoping during a Health Impact assessments identifies all of the potential effects on the health of the populations within the study area under consideration, and then prioritises those which are likely to result in important health outcomes. Health outcomes and equality groups within the scope are assessed using robust evidence based methodologies.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment may be required to identify the environmental effects of a proposed development and ensure that these are thoroughly understood. EIAs are compulsory for certain types of development that include urban development projects where the size of the site is above 0.5ha and where the proposal is likely to have significant environmental impacts.
- 5.3 Amendments made to the EIA regulations through The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 now specify 'population and human health' as one of five core 'factors' to be assessed in an environmental impact assessment. Thus, there is a clear requirement to ensure that health effects are considered early in the design process and that any likely significant health effects arising from the project are identified and mitigated.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any service expenditure incurred in delivering Health Impact Assessments will be funded through existing resources.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 193 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 ('the 2012 Act') inserts a new s116A into the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, which places a duty on the Health and Wellbeing Board to prepare a joint strategic health and wellbeing strategy in respect of the needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The duty to prepare this plan falls on local authorities and the Clinical Commissioning Group, but must be discharged by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the 2012 Act amends the National Health Service Act 2006 to specifically include mental health in the Secretary of State's duty to promote the health of the people of England. A review and refresh of the Mental Health Strategy therefore falls within the remit of the Board.

- 7.3 In implementing its strategy, the Board must have regard to whether these needs could better be met under s75 of the NHS Act 2006. Further, the Board must have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies published on 26 March 2013, and can only depart from this with good reason. The guidance sets out that mental health must be given equal priority to physical health.
- 7.4 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 came into force on 16 May 2017, implementing the 2014 EU Directive. Similar regulations have also come into force under the infrastructure planning regime. One of the key themes of the regulations is greater consistency and quality throughout the EIA process. The regulations provide examples of the type of effects that should be assessed, including factors such as population, human health and climate change.
- 7.5 This strategy must be prepared in accordance with the public sector equalities duty to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equalities 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.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None.

Appendices

- None.

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

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

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

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

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