



TOWER HAMLETS

Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2021-24





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After 12 months of a worldwide pandemic, it is a precarious time for our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted almost all areas of our lives and it is very likely we will be living and working with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future.

I understand people are weary from lockdowns and many are grieving over the loss of loved ones. But we must be clear that there is still some way to go and we cannot lower our guard. Our community focus must be on controlling the virus through driving up vaccination rates and protecting our most vulnerable residents. Vaccinations are happening

at pace which is cause for optimism, but lives remain at risk and we all must act to control the spread of the virus.

The pandemic has thrown multiple inequalities under the spotlight, especially those impacting our BAME communities. The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population has shown us the distressing disadvantages faced by our different communities.

However, I have seen how our communities have showed great resilience and courage over this very challenging year – more than

2,500 residents volunteered to support their neighbours, especially those who were isolating as well as local organisations delivering food, fundraising and befriending.

Tower Hamlets came into the pandemic with high but improving levels of deprivation and employment. Since lockdown, there has been an increase in financial hardship from a reduction in income. One of the clearest signs of changing circumstances has been the surge in food bank use and demand for emergency food packages. There are indications that Tower Hamlets has been hit harder than most, with a rise in Universal Credit claimants

that is steeper than London and UK averages.

As I have said before, while these are tough times, the East End is even tougher. I am confident we can recover.



Tower Hamlets is an amazing place to live and work – our strengths and identity remain firmly linked to our diversity. Ever popular as a preferred place to live, the borough offers opportunities and experiences like nowhere else in the country.

There are good signs for our route back to a more normal life in 2021. We have a timeline to carefully ease lockdown restrictions. We are not there yet, but the country has a plan.

Similarly, our plan for the council sets out our continued COVID-19 response and plans for recovery. This Strategic Plan describes what we will do to

achieve outcomes across three priorities for people, place, and the Council itself. We'll continue to work with our partners across the borough to make sure that our residents, particularly the most vulnerable, are supported.

At the same time, we will continue to build new homes to tackle the housing crisis, invest in additional police officers to keep our streets safe, free school meals for all primary school pupils and improvements to our parks and local neighbourhoods.

We will also new initiatives to help our community top emerge from the pandemic as strong as possible – supporting businesses to

thrive and create jobs, providing new opportunities for our young people and bringing our community back together after months of isolation.

I am very proud of the way we have continued to support frontline services in response to the pandemic. Protecting those in need will always be our priority. It is our responsibility to continue to do the best we can in these circumstances, including using what we have learnt from best practice during the pandemic and changing the way we work to be even more efficient.

This year the council will spend around £1.2 billion on public services to support

people and improve lives. Our plans will see us spend more than half of our net budget on supporting vulnerable people including children. The continued health, social and financial impact of COVID-19 on our community has been huge and will need evermore focus in coming months.

There are undoubtedly difficult choices ahead but by coming together as a community I know we in the East End will emerge from this pandemic ready to succeed. While there is a lot of uncertainty ahead, this Strategic Plan begins to setout how the council will support that to happen.

Will Tuckley,
Chief Executive



Foreword



Whilst COVID-19 has dominated our year, our staff have managed to keep access to services for residents, as well as seeking to improve.

Thanks to the skill, dedication and commitment of council staff, partners, and the community, we have managed multiple demands as part of the pandemic. Not long ago they included supporting residents and businesses through the crisis, working on recovery and trying to deliver much business as usual. There have been three main priorities for the

council – to support lockdown and help our residents through this period; to ensure adequate testing; and to support the roll out of the vaccination programme.

We've been working hard towards our aim of being a council that is focused on getting better outcomes for people that live and work in Tower Hamlets. The way the council is managed, and the engagement and wellbeing of staff, is always vital but particularly during a pandemic. Feedback tells us that over the past few years we have steadily improved, but there are

issues which remain for us to tackle. One of the ways we chart our progress is by working with Investors in People (IiP). I am pleased to report that we did even better than in our last assessment in 2019. With 27 areas covered in the IiP assessment, we have achieved improvement across 11 of those areas since 2019 and seven of them (almost a third of the indicators) are now at the higher-level gold standards. This is good starting point to be built on even further, which we plan to do in the coming year.

As many of us continue to work from home in line with current government guidance, our Smarter Working IT programme has been pivotal in supporting us to do so. Two years ago, we set out a Smarter Together vision to change the way we work. Over these two years we have been moving our most used services online so people can access them anywhere and at any time, to achieve much more together and deliver better services at a faster rate.



Flexible working for council staff has meant we can be deployed to meet changing priorities. The use of virtual meetings with residents and partners, as well as for council committees and other meetings, has meant more and better engagement across the borough.

For many of us the pandemic has given us an abrupt shift to this new way of working and the programme has enabled many of our staff to work from home. By the end of 2020, the programme was complete with all staff who are currently at work

migrated to Office 365 and a Windows 10 device.

This is a fantastic achievement for everyone involved, and even more impressive is that it has been largely delivered during the pandemic – which made it pretty apparent that having ‘IT that works’ was more important than ever.

Looking ahead to 2021-22, we will need to think and work differently. A large part of this will be progressing the creation of a new civic centre at the former Royal London Hospital site – as a focus of the council’s

administrative, democratic and customer services functions within the borough.

The Strategic Plan is an important planning document – it establishes what the council will be doing in the coming year, confirming our corporate priorities and outcomes.

The Plan begins the ‘Golden Thread’ - used to inform business planning throughout the council. It also sets out how the Council will deliver the objective and priorities set out in the Tower Hamlets Plan developed by the Tower Hamlets Strategic

Partnership.

Please read through this Strategic Plan for 2021-24 to understand what we will be doing in the coming year, in order to achieve the council’s long-term outcomes. You can monitor our progress throughout the year in the quarterly performance reports. This is being transparent and accountable as a council, and a part of our improvement journey.



The Strategic Plan is a central part of the council's performance management and accountability framework and is the main strategic business planning document of the council.

It sets out the corporate priorities and outcomes, the high-level activities that will be undertaken to deliver the outcomes, as well as the measures that will help us determine whether we are achieving the outcomes.

In line with the budget setting process, the Strategic Plan is a rolling three-year plan which is updated annually so that it accurately reflects the council's priorities.

The Strategic Plan focuses on three priorities for people, place, and the council:

We want to create opportunities for residents, regardless of their background and circumstances, so that everyone can have the best start in life and are supported to achieve better outcomes for themselves, their family and community.

Tower Hamlets should be a place where people are proud to live, work and visit - a place that allows people to prosper, live safely and lead a healthier life.

We want to be a council that is continuously improving and adapting to enable effective and efficient responses for the communities we serve.

We recognise COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on everyone's everyday lives from work,

school, health, to the way we interact with each other. Sadly, many people lost their lives because of the pandemic including those living and working in the borough. Our thoughts are with their families.

The pandemic has exposed existing inequalities and we know some of our most vulnerable residents who use our social care services will need more support as a result. Many people will experience financial hardship, and the impact on employment, deprivation, mental health, education, and domestic abuse will continue to be felt by our residents going forward.

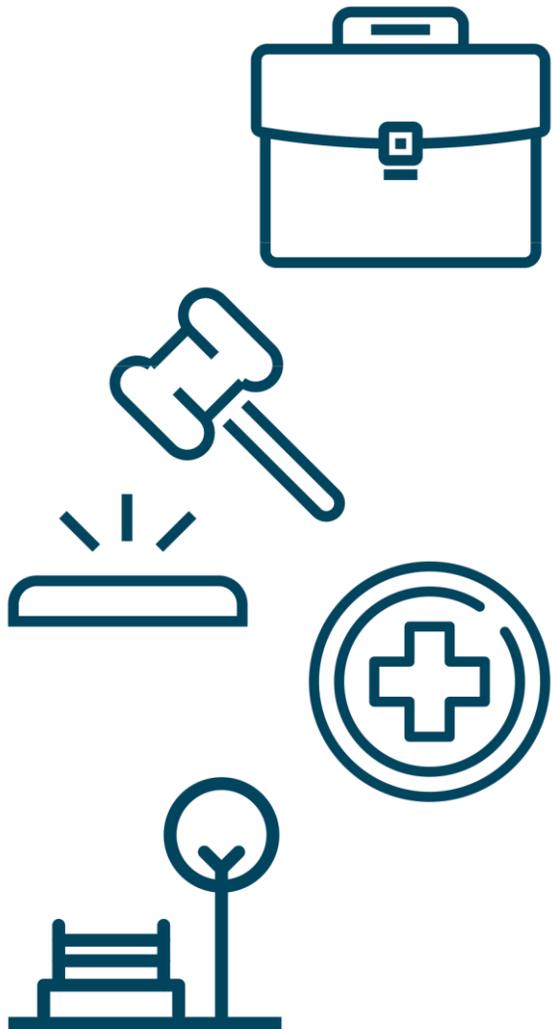
Studies have highlighted a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) population which has

served to expose the consequences of the structural disadvantage and discrimination faced by BAME communities. Also, the public death of George Floyd, and subsequent Black Lives Matter demonstrations, has brought race to the forefront of an international conversation. We will work to ensure race inequality remains at the forefront of our recovery agenda.

We remain committed to tackling inequality putting our residents at the heart of everything we do. We will use the lived experience of our residents to address inequalities faced by our communities.



Population	Education	Housing	Place and Culture
Total population 324,745 (2020)	68% of pupils achieve passes in Maths/English at level 9-4 (broadly equivalent to the previous 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C) (18/19) -(2019)	Average house price in Tower Hamlets £475,445 vs national average of £251,500 (2020)	Over 120 parks and open spaces (2019)
Fastest growing population nationally, expected to reach 372,766 by 2030 (2020)	123 languages spoken in schools (2019)	43,366 (36.13%) of all homes are now privately rented (2018)	22 art galleries and 6 museums (2019)
	60.5% adults hold higher qualification (2018)		Over 1,000 listed buildings and 58 conservation areas (2019)
46% of the populations are aged 20-39 (2020)			3 city farms (2019)
32% of the population are Bangladeshi origin	Economy	Transport	
4 in 10 residents were born outside of the UK (2011)	3 rd highest economic output (2017)	Well connected – 31 stations and 46 bus routes	
Second most densely populated local authority in the country (16,237 persons per km ²) after Islington (2020)	17,355 businesses and 300,500 jobs- (2020)	224km Of road, and 358km of footways and 53km of cycle networks	
	Borough expected to gain 111,000 more jobs by 2026 (2017)	There were 267m passengers used London Underground, Overground and railway station in Tower Hamlets. (2019)	



Poverty and worklessness	Crime	Health and social care	Environment
5 th most deprived in London and 50 th most deprived local authority in England (2019)	30,752 crimes reported in 2019/20	2,860 Children in need (2020)	3 rd highest CO2 emitter in London closing gap on other boroughs (2017)
4 in 10 households live below the poverty line.	1,068 racist and religious hate crimes- third highest in London after Westminster (1,556) and Hackney (1,175)- (2020)	41.48% of Year 6 pupils are overweight or obese (2021)	77% of all residents live in areas that exceeded the annual air pollution target for nitrogen dioxide NO2 (2019)
21% of households have no adult in employment		7 th lowest disability -free life expectancy for men and 3 rd for women In London (63 Men, 60 Female (2016-2018)	Only 21.5% of household waste is recycled (2019/20)
11.8% residents earn below the London Living Wage (2019)		Older population set to be the fastest growing age group, increasing by 44% by 2030	40% of all residents live in areas that exceed the annual air pollution target for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)
At 32.5% Tower Hamlets has the highest child poverty rates in England (2019)	Housing		
	20,073 on housing waiting list - 3 rd highest in London (2020)		
	30,390 or 23% households rely on housing benefit to pay their rent (2018)		
	54,291 additional homes to be built by 2031 (Local Plan)		

Tower Hamlets Council is committed to ensuring that equality is at the heart of everything we do, from the money we spend, the people we employ to the services we provide. Our diversity is one of our greatest strengths and by ensuring we meet local needs we can deliver value for money, improve customer services and empower local people to lead fulfilling lives.

The council is committed to meeting its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty with equality in Tower Hamlets being first and foremost addressed through the Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan which set the strategic direction of the council and its partners.



Equality is embedded throughout these plans and is a key driver for everything we do with the council's commitment to reducing inequality specifically set out at outcome 4 of the Strategic Plan which works to address our most prominent inequalities related to housing, health and employment.

In addition, the council's commitment to fostering good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not is set out under outcome 8 of the Strategic Plan which contains our key actions to strengthen social cohesion in the borough.

To identify equality issues in Tower Hamlets the council undertakes the Borough Equality Assessment (BEA) which is informed by the council's bi-annual Borough Profile. These data enable us to understand our progress and areas of continuous challenge so that we provide accessible and responsive services to improve outcomes for local people. The BEA is incorporated into our strategic plan as well as business planning and is available on our website.



The Strategic Plan is the key link in the 'Golden Thread' and used to inform directorate, service and team planning. It also sets out how the council will deliver the objective and priorities set out in the new Tower Hamlets Plan developed by the Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership.

The council is looking to deliver the following priorities and outcomes over the next three years.

Priority 1 - People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities

1. People access a range of education, training, and employment opportunities.
2. Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential.
3. People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent.
4. Residents feel they fairly share the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled.

Priority 2 - A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in

5. People live in a borough that is clean and green.
6. People live in good quality affordable homes and well-designed neighbourhoods.
7. People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled.
8. People feel they are part of a cohesive and vibrant community.

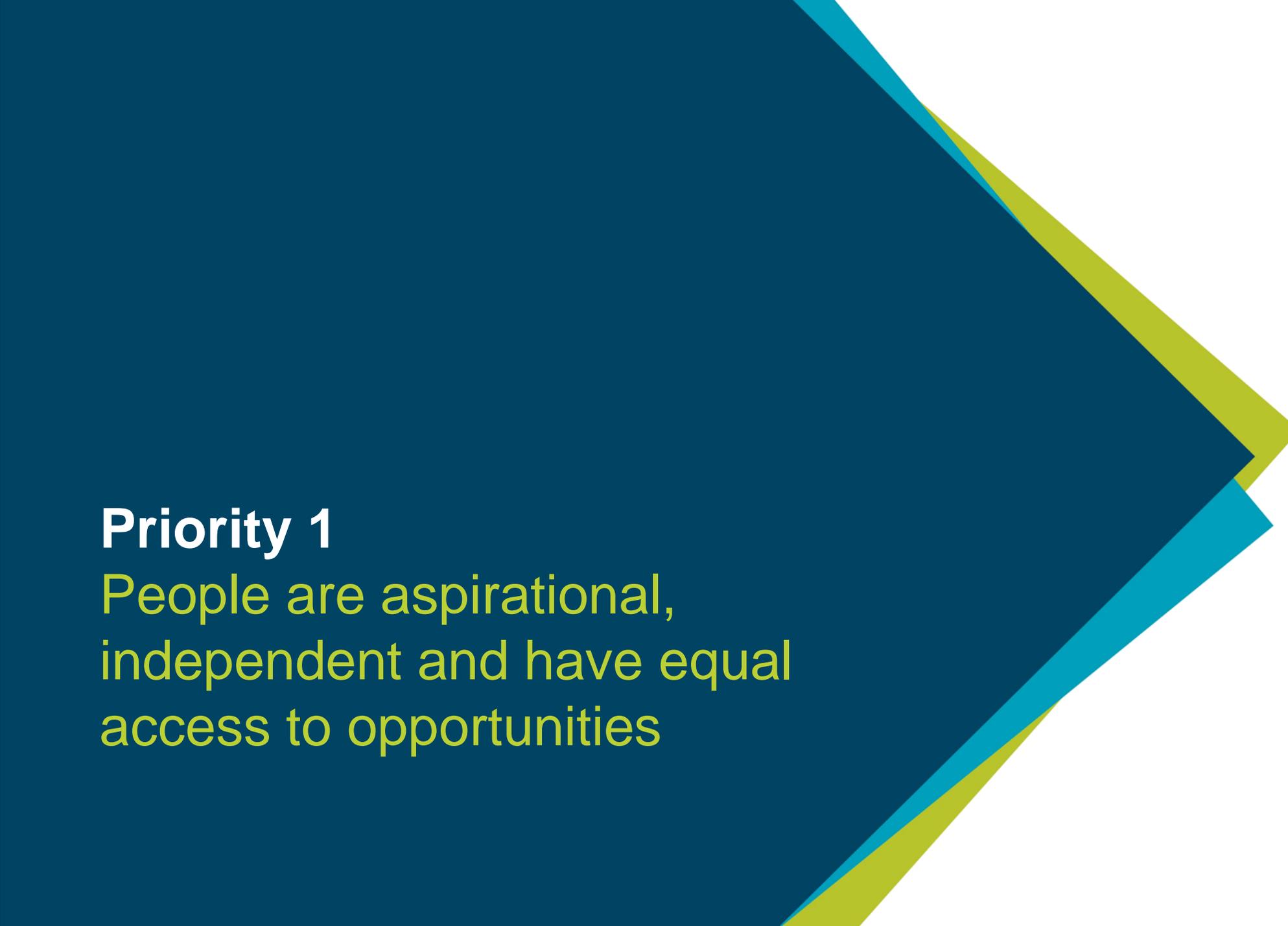
Priority 3 - A dynamic, outcomes-based council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough

9. People say we are open and transparent putting residents at the heart of everything we do.
10. People say we work together across boundaries in a strong and effective partnership to achieve the best outcomes for our residents.
11. People say we continuously seek innovation and strive for excellence to embed a culture of sustainable improvement.



Net Revenue Budget 2021-22 £m	Council Spending by Strategic Priority Outcome				Budget 2021-22				
	Primary Strategic Priority	Net Revenue £m	Dedicated Schools Budget £m	Capital £m	HRA £m	Total £m			
9.0	1. People access a range of education, training and employment opportunities	25.8	-	-	-	25.8			
65.0	2. Children and young people are protected so they can realise their potential	191.3	-	-	-	191.3			
138.7	3. People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent	422.2	-	-	-	422.2			
5.4	4. Residents feel they fairly share in the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled	12.3	-	-	-	12.3			
12.6	5. People live in a borough that's clean and green	37.1	-	-	-	37.1			
14.5	6. People live in good quality affordable homes and well-designed neighbourhoods	41.6	-	-	306.8	348.3			
9.6	7. People feel safe in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled	28.7	-	-	-	28.7			
9.2	8. People feel they are a part of a cohesive and vibrant community	27.7	-	-	-	27.7			
9.3	9. People say we are open and transparent putting residents at the heart of everything we do	45.9	-	-	-	45.9			
12.2	10. People say we work together across boundaries in a strong and effective partnership to achieve the best outcomes for our residents	36.5	-	-	-	36.5			
18.6	11. People say we continuously seek innovation and strive for excellence to embed a culture of sustainable improvement	40.4	-	-	-	40.4			
36.1	12. Not aligned - statutory function	107.6	-	-	-	107.6			
23.8	13. Not aligned with strategic function	70.5	-	-	-	70.5			
-	Dedicated Schools Budget	-	1202.6	-	-	1202.6			
-	Capital	-	-	395.5	-	395.5			
364.1	Total	1087.5	1202.6	395.5	306.8	2992.4			

Net Revenue Budget 2021-22 £m	Funded By				Budget 2021-22				
	Funding Source	Net Revenue £m	Dedicated Schools Budget £m	Capital £m	HRA £m	Total £m			
(115.5)	Core Grants	(330.1)	-	-	-	(330.1)			
(135.0)	Business Rates	(361.7)	-	-	-	(361.7)			
(105.9)	Council Tax	(358.0)	-	-	-	(358.0)			
(6.5)	Collection Fund Deficit Funding from Reserves	(6.5)	-	-	-	(6.5)			
(1.3)	Use of Reserves	(9.5)	-	-	-	(9.5)			
-	Savings to be Identified	(21.8)	-	-	-	(21.8)			
-	Dedicated Schools Grant	-	(1202.6)	-	-	(1202.6)			
-	Capital Funding	-	-	(395.5)	-	(395.5)			
-	Housing Revenue Account	-	-	-	(306.8)	(306.8)			
(364.1)	Total	(1087.5)	(1202.6)	(395.5)	(306.8)	(2992.4)			



Priority 1

People are aspirational,
independent and have equal
access to opportunities



The people of Tower Hamlets are dynamic and diverse and have shown resilience throughout the pandemic. Our children and young people are aspirational, and our adults are increasingly interested in living in more environmentally-friendly and healthy communities. Going forward we will seek to build on these strengths. COVID-19 has also created new challenges and worsened existing inequalities, with some communities affected more than others.

Restoring the quality and consistency of education provision is now a major focus at national and local level. Most children have now been out of school for a significant proportion of the past two academic years. This will create unprecedented challenges in

mitigating the long-term impact of missed education. There will be a challenge going forward in providing the safest possible environments for education and learning in the borough.

As the economy recovers, we will work with partners to support people into employment, access welfare and debt advice, life-long learning courses and ensuring early years education and childcare are affordable and fit for purpose so that people can grasp opportunities and succeed.

Health inequalities have been exposed and exasperated during the pandemic and evidence has shown that the elderly, people with disabilities and underlying health conditions and people from Black,

Asian and minority ethnic populations have disproportionately faced illness and death. Furthermore, mental health problems have been on the rise due to major challenges such as job and housing insecurity, learning loss, social isolation, domestic violence and exploitation. A community-led approach based on shared outcomes is needed to repair these entrenched societal issues and this aspect of our recovery programme will be based on the protection the most at risk and investment in evidenced-based preventative solutions.

There are four main outcomes under Priority 1 that the council's actions for the coming year are focussed on achieving and these are described in more detail in the section that follows.



Outcome 1

People access a range of education, training, and employment opportunities



Outstanding education and economic opportunity support people to thrive in our changing and challenging environment. We want to ensure that every child and young person in Tower Hamlets has every chance to have the best possible opportunities and achieve the best possible outcomes and life chances. We want every young person to achieve the best academic results they can, be prepared for employment and future success. Our schools achieve good results, and in some cases above national averages. However, there is still room for improvement, and through the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership, our schools operate as a family to support, challenge and encourage each other in their determination to do the very best for every child.

From our COVID-19 resident impact survey in 2020 we know that schools reopening was one of respondents' top four concerns (24%) and the many months of missed education caused by the pandemic will have severely impacted on our children and young people and have the potential to set back the huge progress our schools have made. As schools reopen to all pupils for a second time, we will need to work even harder to support them appropriately and ensure that the impact of this gap in education is addressed and mitigated. Our Young WorkPath service will continue to ensure that young people and those coming into the workforce have the support they need to make informed choices about their career path and access the skills, training and

apprenticeships available to unlock their potential.

The COVID-19 resident impact survey shows more than 50% of residents identified there has been a negative impact (extremely negative or fairly negatively) on their employment status and work, and respondents named support for residents who are unemployed or reduced in income (35%) as their top concern. Many residents will be newly unemployed, in addition to those who were already looking for work and placed further away from the labour market. As the supply of jobs reduces labour market competition could push some residents even further away from accessing employment including those with limited skills or experience including young people who were looking to enter the workforce.

Outcome 1

People access a range of education, training, and employment opportunities



Supported by our Growth and Economic Development Partnership, we will continue our efforts to reach out to local businesses to understand their concerns around the impact of the pandemic and assist in their recovery.

We have already responded through support and financial assistance including grants and rent reductions.

A package of support will nevertheless continue, to help businesses in their recovery journey. Similarly, we will remain flexible in

working with partners to provide employment and skills support for those residents, including young people and particularly those facing a prolonged period of unemployment.

We will support access to roles in hard to fill sectors or those areas where job supply will grow or remain strong, for example the green economy which will support our objectives to mitigate climate change.

In addressing the economic impact of the pandemic on our borough we will continue to deliver the priorities held within

our Growth and Economic Development Plan which seek to support the foundation of economic prosperity within the borough.

Outcome 1

People access a range of education, training, and employment opportunities



What actions will we take?

1. Support schools as they reopen to all pupils and their activity to improve attainment and address gaps in education
2. Provide access to entry point learning which promote personal development
3. Develop a programme to enhance young people's understanding of the world of work, including any changes to the landscape post COVID-19 lockdown
4. Understand the impact

of the pandemic on the London labour market and progress a borough response

5. Provide tailored support for job seekers, in particular those with sustained periods of unemployment
6. Implement a programme of business outreach to extend our network and enhance our understanding of the impact of the crisis
7. Deliver a range of targeted interventions to support the recovery and growth of local businesses

What will we measure?

- Percentage of eligible children living in low-income families accessing early years provision
- Percentage of secondary pupils attending school regularly
- Percentage of 16 -17 year-olds in education, employment or training
- Percentage of Idea Store Learning learners who pass their course
- Number of small and medium and new enterprises supported

through the council's business programmes

- Number of young people (16 - 24) supported into employment via the Kickstart programme
- Percentage of residents who complete their job preparation training with the WorkPath service
- Number of residents supported into employment by the WorkPath service

Outcome 2

Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential



Children and young people are a priority for this council, and we know that the first 1,001 days of a child's life are crucial for healthy mental and physical development. We therefore remain committed to a system wide approach to improving outcomes for children in the early years with a focus on speech, language and communication skills. From the earliest years through to adolescence, children also need access to safe spaces to play and engage in physical activity. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, access to some of these safe spaces has been limited and may be for some time.

We know that the pandemic has impacted significantly on children and young people in the borough and that

this impact is likely to be felt for a long time. Some children will have been in particularly vulnerable situations during the lockdowns which has led to an increase in both volume and complexity of casework for the various services that support children and families. The longer-term impacts of potentially higher rates of poverty, less secure housing and work are all likely to lead to higher levels of stress for families and an increased demand in services across the council and partner agencies.

The response to COVID-19 has enabled strong and effective partnership working in this area and we want to take the elements that have worked well with us into the future. We will support our children, young people and families to make

informed choices about what good health entails, directing them towards the right support at the right time to address any concerns about both physical and mental health. We will continue to work to remove the stigma around mental health, encouraging children, young people and their families to talk to each other and share their needs.

We also want to ensure that there is a much stronger voice for young people in relation to making their environment feel safe, the development of youth services and in response to community safety issues. Our focus going forward will be on building resilience within families and between different communities to ensure that children are safe and secure.

Outcome 2

Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential



What actions will we take?

1. Ensure that our early help and social care staff have access to training and development opportunities that are linked to the practice issues that are our most important and of greatest priority. This will enable us to respond to the immediate and longer-term challenges of our community
2. Coordinate our partnership response to and recovery from the

3. Create and map clear pathways into early help from social care and other universal services; and to develop consistent understanding of thresholds across services and agencies
4. Establish clearer information and agreed

pandemic and other safeguarding issues via the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership ensuring the voice of children and families influences and shapes our approach

5. Continue to offer Family Group Conferencing to families in need at the earliest stage. This is an important element of being able to reduce the demand on expensive placements and emphasise family solutions
6. Further strengthen the ways that we collect feedback from children, young people, families

expectations for families to access health services such as CAMHS and SEND services

and the wider community and use this to influence how we deliver our services. Embrace and develop innovative ways of reaching parents and young people by improving the use of social media and other online mechanisms

Outcome 2

Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential



7. Engage with Schools, the Youth Service and the Voluntary Sector on how to strengthen access to high-quality activities outside of school for children and young people making the best use of our partnership approach

8. Continue to focus on our most pressing issues - neglect, domestic abuse serious youth violence and exploitation

What will we measure?

- Percentage of Education Healthcare Plan assessments completed within the statutory timescales of 20 weeks
- Children with child protection plans receiving timely visits
- Families who are seeing the benefits of being supported before problems escalate
- Percentage of pupils who are regularly attending primary school in reception year

- Percentage of pupils who are regularly attending primary school in Years 1 - 6
- Long term looked after children who are in stable placements
- Young people engaging with the youth offer who achieve a recorded outcome

Outcome 3

People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent



The quality of our lives is strongly dictated by the state of our health, which is in turn shaped by our genetics, lifestyles, living environment and access to quality health care. While Tower Hamlets is a great place to live, there remain challenges in relation to health and wellbeing and the 'wider determinants' of good health. Compared to other places, we tend to have higher rates of diabetes, mental health issues and substance misuse.

Our primary focus last year was ensuring an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including providing support to prevent and control outbreaks and providing a comprehensive testing offer. As we move into another phase of the pandemic, we will continue this and

work with health partners to roll out the COVID-19 vaccine effectively. At the same time, we will put a renewed focus on our other public health priorities, including promoting healthy weight in children, tackling substance misuse, and immunisation programmes.

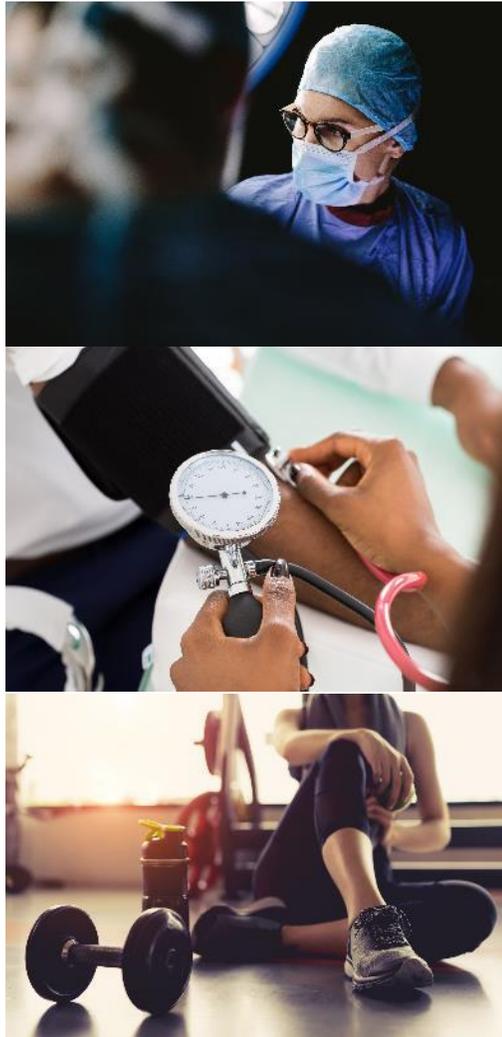
The pandemic has thrown health inequalities into stark contrast and we know that people of a BAME background, older people and people living in poverty are more likely to die of COVID-19. We have worked to tackle this with our communities, carrying out targeted communication and engagement activity. This focus will continue with our commitment to tackle the inequalities facing our communities, both in relation to our response to the pandemic and its

wider impacts. This includes targeting information and advice in relation to the COVID-19 vaccine to groups where there is lower take-up of the offer, promoting good mental health in young people, and tackling BAME inequalities in relation to health and wellbeing.

Along with public health, adult social care and commissioning have been on the front line of the pandemic response. This year, as our work begins to transition back to normal in the next phase of the council's pandemic response, we will refocus our efforts on providing the right care, at the right time, that supports people to be as independent as possible, and focuses on prevention, individual strengths and a holistic approach to people's wellbeing.

Outcome 3

People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent



Going forward, we will build on what worked well during the pandemic and continue to do everything we can to stop the spread of infection, support people with their physical and mental health, and empower people to be as independent as possible. Ongoing partnership work will enable us to address some of the financial challenges we face whilst maintaining our commitment to provide high quality, joined-up services.

What actions will we take?

1. Continue to lead the public health and social care response to the COVID-19 pandemic and support the delivery of an effective vaccination programme.
2. Focus on our public health priorities in addition to the pandemic, including promoting healthy weight in children, tackling substance misuse and immunisation programmes.
3. Take action to address the wider impact of the pandemic on mental health and healthy lifestyles, specifically looking to mitigate the disproportionate impact on particular groups.
4. Develop a clear vision and strategy for adult social care going forward, ensuring we provide the right care at the right time that supports people to be as independent as possible.
5. Address the financial pressures faced by adult social care to ensure our care and support system is sustainable going forward.
6. Redesign, relaunch and implement a number of adult social care support services including day support, homecare and information and advice provision. We will also develop our future plans to increase the level of extra care housing within the borough.

Outcome 3

People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent



7. Continue to integrate health and care so that residents get a better, more joined up experience, retaining and developing innovations that have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Support adults to meet outcomes important to them, promoting individual wellbeing and maximising individual strengths, including those in peoples support networks and our vibrant community.

What will we measure?

- People who are more independent after being supported through reablement services
- Residents' self-reported level of physical activity
- Residents' self-reported level of health
- Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments as part of self-directed support
- Overall satisfaction with care and support services
- Overall contribution of care and support services to quality of life
- Number of people who are signposted to find appropriate advice and support in the wider community that helps them to maintain their independence
- Proportion of completed safeguarding enquiries where the desired outcomes were achieved
- Number of people engaging with smoking cessation service who quit smoking

Outcome 4

Residents feel they fairly share the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled



The wealth gap trickles down into various opportunity gaps, which has been reflected in disparities in infection and death rates during the coronavirus pandemic, as well health inequalities that existed before COVID-19 and this is certainly true in Tower Hamlets where deprivation and affluence exist side by side. The consequences of this can be profound and far-reaching; weakening social solidarity eroding trust in institutions and a growing sense of unfairness, for instance, during the pandemic people with university degrees have been more able to work from home, protecting both their incomes and health. Conversely, many of those within the most insecure types of employment or working on the front line have been exposed to greater health risks or

have faced a reduction or loss of income in some cases leading to the threat of homelessness

In Tower Hamlets we want to be a part of the solution and we are listening to the experiences of our residents, including those who have borne the brunt of COVID-19. We are investing in initiatives which will help create a borough where every resident has the same opportunity to fulfil their potential in life irrespective of socioeconomic background, including COVID-19 recovery funding.

Unfortunately, illness and death have been concentrated amongst certain groups such as those living with chronic disease, people with learning disabilities and people from Black,

Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, who are also more likely to live in poorer areas and in multi-generational households. One of the three main themes in our refreshed five-year Health and Wellbeing Strategy is the 'health impacts of poverty' which will address the link between inequality and poor health outcomes.

We have also challenged unfairness and discrimination through the removal of the statue of slave trader Robert Milligan and review of statues, buildings and public sites. We will work with our partners to deliver the recommendations from the BAME Inequality Commission which focused on Education, Employment, Health, and Community Leadership.

Outcome 4

Residents feel they fairly share the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled



Employment and education are important in increasing social mobility so we are working with partners to sustain our local childcare offer and throughout the pandemic we have continued and will continue to support lifelong learning through online courses via our Idea Stores and Children's Centres.

Achieving digital inclusion in Tower Hamlets is also an essential element in creating a fairer society in terms of both money and jobs and there has never been a better time to help residents get online. However, we know that some people, particularly

the elderly, BAMEs, people with disabilities, and those living in social housing do not have the same access as others. We will work with our partners to develop a comprehensive borough wide plan to ensure all of our residents have the tools and skills to access services through digital channels.

While the pandemic has caused a marked increase in the intensity of support required in particular around support for shielding, food poverty and housing provision, it has also provided opportunities in how the council can work with partners and the

wider community to support the most vulnerable. For example, we have provided emergency accommodation to around 260 people who were either rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping and we have provided over 500 tonnes of food to local food providers. We are committed to extend our work with partners to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable are met against a backdrop of reduced funding across the public and voluntary sector. We will continue to work with partners to deliver our tackling poverty programme which will

include supporting local food providers, providing crises grant to residents and income maximisation.

The economic impact of the pandemic will be long lasting, and against a backdrop of unaffordable housing, we will continue to prioritise early intervention to prevent homelessness and are keen to maintain the gains achieved in working with partners to reduce rough sleeping during the pandemic. Meeting post-pandemic socioeconomic challenges are critical to the borough's recovery which makes our work in this area even more urgent.

Outcome 4

Residents feel they fairly share the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled

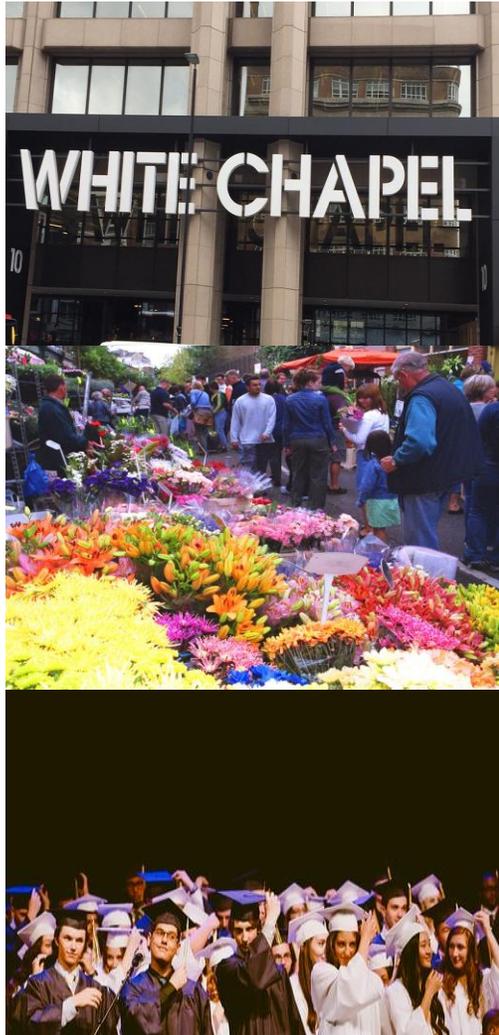


What actions will we take?

1. Work with TH Partnership to deliver the recommendations of the BAME Inequality Commission
2. Explore options on the borough's approach to tackle poverty and address the additional impact of the pandemic in the borough
3. Carefully consider and plan any step down in emergency food relief and other assistance with reference to residents' and other support organisations' resilience and capacity
4. Support residents to access high quality welfare advice
5. Deliver initiatives to meet the additional impact of the pandemic on homelessness and rough sleeping within the borough
6. Deliver a suite of initiatives to improve customer access channels across housing options
7. Develop a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy, working in partnership with communities to tackle health inequalities exacerbated by COVID-19
8. Utilise social value benefits derived from procurement activity
9. Review and improve the local childcare offer

Outcome 4

Residents feel they fairly share the benefits from growth and inequality is tackled



What will we measure?

- Residents' self-reported level of health for groups experiencing health inequalities – BAME residents
- Residents' self-reported level of health for groups experiencing health inequalities – residents from C2, D, E socio-economic groups
- Proportion of residents who complete their job preparation training with the WorkPath service who are women
- Proportion of residents who complete their job

- Preparation training with the WorkPath service who are from BAME backgrounds
- Proportion of residents who complete their job preparation training with the WorkPath service who have disabilities
- Proportion of residents who complete their job preparation training with the WorkPath service who live in the most deprived postcode areas
- Average annual income increase for residents receiving benefit

- Maximisation support
- Number of residents who are better off after receiving benefit maximisation support
- Households whose homelessness has been prevented or relieved



Priority 2

A borough that our residents
are proud of and love to live in

Amongst all the negative news stories concerning the COVID-19 crisis there are inspiring ones such as those highlighting examples of extraordinary community spirit. In the UK over 2.5 million people have signed up with over 2,700 local groups under Mutual Aid umbrella. In Tower Hamlets over 2,500 residents elected to volunteer, kindly offering to deliver food, medicines, share groceries and have virtual chats with neighbours they had never met. This proves that despite being a borough of contrasts and contradictions people are proud to live Tower Hamlets and want to be a part of the solution.

We want to improve the quality of life of our residents by being the greenest, cleanest and most environmentally sustainable borough where everyone can thrive and



flourish. We will do this by using our resources responsibly and protecting the local and global environment, ensuring that we are better able to respond to the challenges arising from climate change, as well as being more likely and able to mobilise to tackle and mitigate environmental problems.

The community spirit that kicked in during the COVID-19 crisis is a critical part of resilience in Tower Hamlets. As place-shaping leaders, we are thinking much harder about how and what we build, and in regeneration, we can enable social interaction and cohesion.

Although there has been an ongoing need to find savings, by working more effectively in partnership there has been a sustained fall in crime and

increased confidence in reporting crime. High performing, responsive and accountable partnerships are part of our vision of communities where local people play a part in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and where they can see and feel the difference that local agencies are making to their communities.

During the pandemic we recognised the strengths of our communities and want to enable them to grow. As neighbours looked out for one another new relationships were formed, giving a greater awareness that wellbeing and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. In partnership with the voluntary and community sector we are making it easier, post-lockdown, for people to organise community events and

neighbourhood street parties. This will contribute to the development of community spirit, shared values, and help tackle social isolation.

Voluntary and community sector organisations have played an integral role in the borough's response to COVID-19, with many adapting their services to respond to the needs of the community – the council will continue to work with the sector to engage with communities and support the most vulnerable in recovery.

There are four overarching outcomes under Priority 2 that the council's actions for the coming year are focused on achieving, and these are described in more detail in the section that follows.

Outcome 5
People live in a borough that is clean and green



Managing the impact of growth, traffic congestion, and the levels of waste produced presents a significant challenge in how we limit the impact of a growing population on our environment. With forthcoming legislation set to provide local authorities with additional powers to improve the environment, we are committed to working with stakeholders to raise awareness and change behaviour, delivering sustainable outcomes to the local environment and embrace a green recovery as part of the borough's growth. Tower Hamlets has the fifth highest levels of air pollution in London and around 40% of our residents live in areas that breach EU and government guidance on safe levels of air pollution. Transport remains the highest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions, however,

intermittent periods of lockdown have led to tempered levels of air pollution from road traffic and it is crucial we build on this gain.

We will work with the local community, GLA, TfL and Government acting to support lower levels of air pollution across the borough through delivering Air Quality Action Plan. This will support our commitment to the climate emergency, building on our Climate Change Engagement Event held in March to further engage residents and partners across sectors, and deliver initiatives to progress our ambition of a net zero carbon council (by 2025) and borough (by 2050).

Our COVID-19 resident impact survey highlighted improvements to streets and pavements for social

distancing (24%) in their top four concerns. The council will continue to work hard to accommodate and promote more sustainable modes of transport, for business, work and leisure. This includes accelerating the delivery of the School Streets and Liveable Streets programmes to promote active travel..

We will put the wellbeing of residents, the borough and the planet at the heart of recovery. In doing so, we will support approaches to a circular economy, support ecosystems and enhance biodiversity across the borough. The impact of the pandemic has underlined the importance of accessible public and open space for the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Outcome 5
People live in a borough that is clean and green



This being the case we will continue our programmes to make the local environment more appealing, increasing the cleanliness and quality of parks and public spaces to counteract the detrimental impact of the pandemic on physical and mental health of our residents.

What actions will we take?

1. Implement new arrangements to improve cleansing and the quality of the local environment
2. Deliver initiatives to encourage/enforce waste reduction and

3. Deliver the Liveable Streets programme and target our investment in streets and pavements including initiatives to make it easier for residents and visitors to observe social distancing
4. Deliver initiatives to maintain and improve existing parks and green spaces
5. Deliver the Air Quality Action Plan and initiatives to prevent pre-COVID-19 levels of air quality

6. Promote use of cleaner fuel types amongst residents and businesses
7. Deliver the council's Net Zero Carbon action plan and work with residents and partners to cut carbon emissions across the borough
8. Agree and deliver a Biodiversity Action Plan to protect and enhance wildlife across the borough

What will we measure?

- Level of CO2 emissions generated by the council's activities
- Level of household recycling
- Proportion of primary school pupils benefiting from a school street at their school
- Proportion of the population who live in low traffic neighbourhoods
- Residents engaged with initiatives which contribute to reducing air pollution

- Level of public realm cleanliness (litter)

Outcome 6

People live in good quality affordable homes and well-designed neighbourhoods



Accessing good quality, affordable housing is an ongoing challenge in a borough which has a fast-growing population, low income levels for many households and a fast-growing private rented sector with high private rents and house prices. Pressures on the high demand and limited supply of social housing lead to complex challenges concerning overcrowding, homelessness and rough sleeping, while the expansion of the private sector as a source of housing presents challenges to ensure that this stock is in good condition and well managed.

While Tower Hamlets delivers amongst the largest numbers of housing and affordable housing for local authorities each year, we continue to have stretching housing delivery targets from the GLA and

have three designated Opportunity Areas designated to accommodate projected population growth of about 25% by 2031. This level of growth within our borough's 2,157 hectare footprint present significant challenges to ensure the correct social, economic and physical infrastructure is in place to accommodate this growth, that residents have a vital say and role in regeneration and that opportunities that arise from growth are accessible for our residents.

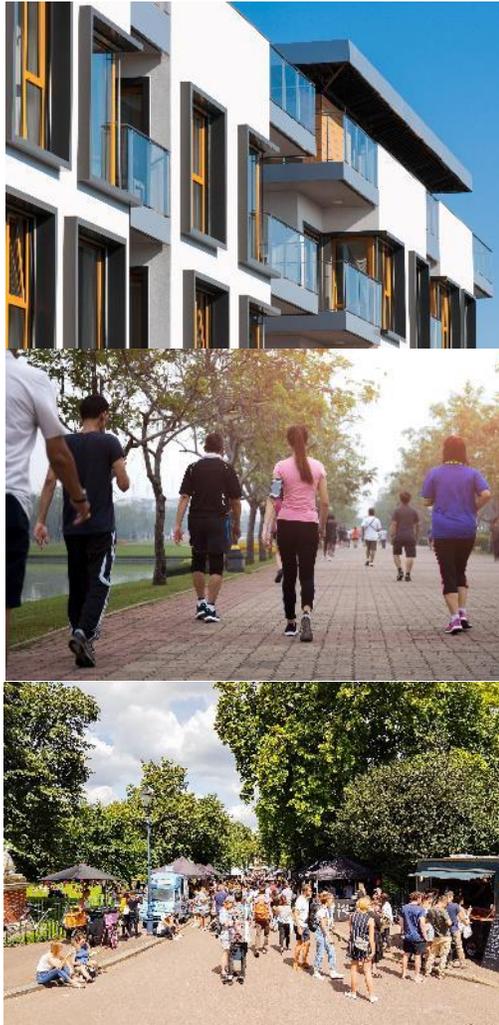
The pandemic has created a range of additional challenges and opportunities concerning the social, economic health and wellbeing of our residents. Through our new Local Plan, emerging development documents and approach to regeneration, we will ensure that the

correct social, economic and physical infrastructure is in place to not only meet our challenging targets but support us in our journey to recovery and growth. Our priority remains to ensure that residents have a vital say and role in regeneration and that opportunities that arise from growth are accessible for all those within our community.

The negative impact of the pandemic on income levels within the borough continue to mean that the delivery of genuinely affordable housing continues to be a key area of focus. As a council we are committed to delivering affordable homes in way which maximises value for money and ensures that resident need is better met.

Outcome 6

People live in good quality affordable homes and well-designed neighbourhoods



What actions will we take?

1. Work with housing associations and other partners to improve the supply of affordable housing
2. Identify sites for new council homes and commence delivery
3. Respond to national changes in planning policy, implement the Local Plan and produce robust development policy which drive the council's recovery ambitions
4. Deliver a borough

programme for regeneration which enhances the council's approach to recovery

5. Support fire safety improvements across the borough and deliver initiatives to improve housing conditions including the council's programme of estate renewal
6. Negotiate and deliver strategic infrastructure

What will we measure?

- Residents' satisfaction with the area as a place to live
- Level of affordable homes permitted (by habitable rooms)
- Level of affordable homes completed (by habitable room)
- Homeless households moved into affordable, sustainable housing
- Lettings to overcrowded households
- Level of temporary accommodation use

- Number of regeneration outcomes secured
- Percentage of annual infrastructure expenditure target achieved

Outcome 7

People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled



Working to make Tower Hamlets a safer place for our residents and communities is a key priority in Tower Hamlets. Feeling or being unsafe can manifest in a number of ways, from anti-social behaviour (ASB) to serious violence to exploitation and can happen in both public and private spaces. We know that the impact can be devastating for both victims and perpetrators, and residents continually highlight crime and ASB as a priority issue they want to see improve.

Tower Hamlets has specific challenges and strengths when it comes to crime and ASB. We have high levels of deprivation, high levels of substance misuse and high population density; all of which have implications for community safety.

Our strengths are in our diverse and active communities and in our strong record of effective partnership working.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had and will have a significant impact on crime, ASB and its root causes. We know, for example, that ASB demand has risen significantly since the first national lockdown in 2020; and we are now seeing increases in the levels of domestic abuse which remains a key area of concern given some victims will have gone into lockdown with their abusers. Going forward, we will need to understand the longer-term impacts of the pandemic and what this means for community safety. As well as challenges, we want to utilise opportunities for further resident

involvement, working with third sector partners and community mobilisation to help prevent and tackle crime and ASB.

As lockdown restrictions ease there is a risk that certain crime types like domestic abuse and serious youth violence might increase. The council will make use of all the tools and powers available to it to prevent issues re-emerging and will continue to work closely with the Community Safety Partnership and local residents to take robust enforcement action against perpetrators, whilst also seeking to reduce the harm caused to communities by offering support to victims and safeguarding people at risk of abuse or neglect.

Outcome 7

People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled



We are placing a significant emphasis on prevention and intervention, whether this be through our support for parents with substance misuse problems, our drug and alcohol treatment and recovery offer, or our concentrated efforts to reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system. The Council has also committed significant funding to mainstream neighbourhood management and create a new multi-agency 'Antisocial Behaviour and Drug Suppression Unit', who will work closely with police partners, and other council services to tackle the demand for drugs and take action against those involved in street-based supply.

The terrorist threat we face in the UK is multifaceted and continuously

evolving. We will continue to work with the Home Office and security services to deliver our statutory duties in relation to PREVENT and safeguarding those at risk of radicalisation. We will build on a strong platform of work to improve the resilience of the borough and the built environment to address risks in relation to counter terrorism. Continuing to improve trust and confidence in Prevent remains vital if we are to ensure that our programmes reach the people who most need it. We will continue to work with our community and the PREVENT independent board to build trust and confidence.

The Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 has re-emphasised that people's experience of crime,

disorder, safety, and services is not the same. Being a woman, being of a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background, being LGBTQIA, being disabled, having different gender to the one assigned at birth, being older or younger – for example - all has an impact. We are committed to tackling inequality in relation to this as part of our borough-wide commitment to tackle inequality in all its forms. This includes work to address the disproportionate amount of young people from a BAME background enter the criminal justice system.

Outcome 7

People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled



What actions will we take?

1. Prioritise drug and alcohol treatment services to save lives and reduce the economic and social costs of drug and alcohol related ASB and harm. Continue to commission efficient and effective substance misuse outreach, treatment and recovery services
2. Provide education and awareness-raising to prevent and tackle issues including violence against

3. Deliver the capital programme and implement an upgrade of the Public Space CCTV infrastructure. Utilise the CCTV assets to deter, detect and investigate crime and ASB and protect the built environment.
4. Reduce the numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system. Understand and address the

5. Hold perpetrators of crime and anti social behaviour to account, using the full spectrum of our council enforcement powers when needed.
6. Continuously improve our council service offer for victims of ASB, and ensure we make it easier to report ASB to the Council working with residents and

7. Continue to deliver PREVENT and PROTECT to safeguard and support those at risk of radicalisation and strengthen security and resilience across the public realm.

Outcome 7

People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled



What will we measure?

- Young people entering the youth justice system for the first time
- Young people reoffending rate
- Residents' concern about crime and anti-social behaviour
- Residents' feeling of safety in their local area
- Drug users (opiate users) successfully completing treatment and not returning within 6 months
- Victims of violence

- against women and girls who feel safer after engaging with victim support
- Criminal justice clients successfully completing drugs and alcohol treatment

Outcome 8
People feel they are part of a cohesive and vibrant community



The community response to the pandemic has shown resilience and an incredible coming together of local people to support each other through volunteering and mutual aid groups. Alongside this, the Black Lives Matter movement has highlighted the need for the council and partners to go further to address the impact of inequalities on community cohesion.

Successfully tackling COVID-19 could not have been done without the voluntary and community sector (VCS). They provided and will continue to provide an impressive range of support to residents and local businesses. Communicating key messages through grassroots organisations has been proven to be effective and the VCS has been at the forefront in sharing advice about how to keep safe, giving important

information about testing and the vaccine and reaching out to vulnerable and hard to reach groups through befriending and food relief.

The COVID-19 Community Champions has also been instrumental in building trust in the borough. Through their local networks, volunteer champions have been sharing clear, myth-busting information about the vaccine which is ultimately helping to save lives.

The borough's refreshed VCS Strategy fostering the independence of the sector is going from strength to strength, through the development of an integrated online directory, the advancement of digital inclusion and a new volunteering plan which builds on the outstanding level of volunteering by our residents

throughout the pandemic.

We want to be a borough where people feel they belong, get on well together and have an equal voice and 'Our Tower Hamlets - a plan for a more cohesive community' sets out our approach to do just that. It promises to make it easier for residents to organise community events and partake in social action, such as the 'tackling hate' campaign. Most importantly, it includes measures which will prove that positive change is happening.

Our partners will face challenges going forward and we will be working alongside them to maintain a thriving voluntary and community sector in the borough.

Outcome 8 People feel they are part of a cohesive and vibrant community



What actions will we take?

1. Work with stakeholders and communities to tackle emerging tensions and issues within and between communities including those generated by hate crimes or extremism
2. Work with Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Services and other partners to deliver the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) strategy
3. Utilise our assets and services in new socially distanced and safe ways to support the Voluntary and Community Sector, build on the community cohesion brought about by the pandemic and mitigate the impact of the pandemic

4. Build on volunteering during the pandemic, empowering people to be active in their local community
5. Utilise new ways of working to champion our diverse communities in a safe and socially distanced manner

What will we measure?

- Residents' level of volunteering
- Level of hate crime
- Residents' perception of people from different backgrounds getting on well
- Percentage of Idea Store learners who pass their English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course
- Proportion of residents who have friends from other ethnic backgrounds

Priority 3

A dynamic, outcomes-based council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough



Tower Hamlets is one of the fastest growing local authorities in the UK and in some areas of the borough populations are predicted to nearly double over the next decade. As a result, not only are we experiencing an increase in demand for services, but also rising expectations which is a trend seen nationally.

More and more residents believe that access to council services should be more flexible, faster and digitalised. Accordingly, we must transform in a way that manages expectations, demand and makes the best use of limited resources while continuing to improve people's experience of the borough. To achieve this, we take an outcomes-based approach is less top-down, more collaborative and encompasses shared vision and

explicit outcomes to be achieved with our partners.

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 crisis has accelerated the need to embrace change and innovation using all the tools we have, and this includes technological and people power. Strong relationships shaped by a shared vision amongst partners makes it easier to commission effectively, align leadership structures and meet outcomes and implementation timelines. Without partnership working we would not have been able to deliver vital projects such as the vaccination programme and the rapid move to virtual public meetings and remote working for relevant staff. Existing partnerships with our housing, education and sports and leisure

providers have also been working tirelessly to deliver outcomes contained within joint strategies developed in collaboration with residents and local businesses.

As residents demand that services are increasing digital and as readily available as they are in other sectors our partners and ourselves must be more agile, leaner and strategic. Providing shared and integrated services which harnesses digital innovation will make us more dynamic and proactive in responding to the changing needs of our borough. It also involves using data more effectively, capturing evidence along the journey from activity to outcome. This offers the opportunity to deliver insights regarding the people who need our services

enabling evidence-based decision making and well as system-wide efficiencies.

There are three overarching outcomes under Priority 3 that the council's actions for the coming year are focussed on achieving and these are described in more detail in the section that follows



Outcome 9

People say we are open and transparent putting residents at the heart of everything we do



Putting our residents first is at the heart of everything we do in Tower Hamlets. Thus, it is important to understand if and how residents are happy with the way we run things, and if they believe we keep them well informed. We will continue to use a range of data and intelligence about residents experiences and needs to prioritise our resources on the issues that matter most, which is increasingly important as we recover from the pandemic and try to balance significantly reduced budgets.

We will build on digital provision and access during the pandemic and move to be 'digital by default'.

Our Community Engagement Plan contains the overall objective of 'supporting staff to involve communities in everything we do'. We are committed to creating an environment where the skills and

expertise of local people are harnessed to contribute to all council work, including cross-cutting strategies concerning health, disabilities and domestic violence.

In order to communicate better with residents, we have launched a dedicated COVID-19 helpline where residents can receive information and advice about the virus and vaccination roll-out. Our call handlers, who speak eight community languages, have received 800 calls have also made over 4,000 calls to residents as part of the work to proactively book appointments for eligible residents. This is incredibly valuable and impressive work which will help protect residents across the borough.

Another recent resident focused initiative is the launch of the council's interactive 'Let's Talk Tower Hamlets'

portal which is making it even easier for people to have their say. The website shows information on all public consultations handily in one place and it is anticipated that now even more people will share their views.

Despite the pandemic, the important role councillors have in representing constituents has not changed. We adapted quickly, shifting from in-person Member-level meetings to virtual ones without any significant issues.

The council and its partners collect and store large amounts of data on our residents, businesses and communities that we use as part of our everyday service delivery and transform into intelligence to inform service planning.

Outcome 9

People say we are open and transparent putting residents at the heart of everything we do



However, much of these data are fragmented and underused and as highlighted by the pandemic we need to unlock the potential of our data giving staff the power to make better informed decisions to deliver better outcomes for our residents and communities.

We will ensure that we fully adhere to data protection laws and best practice and continue to take these responsibilities seriously.

What actions will we take?

1. Use our consultation hub: Let's Talk Tower Hamlets, along with consultation standards, to support greater resident participation in shaping council services.
2. Building on the change to date and our learning from COVID-19 further improve customer experiences by increasing digital access to services
3. Continuously improve systems and processes to support democratic

participation by local communities

4. Delivering objective one of the Communications Strategy – telling our story
5. Publish information which empowers local residents and stakeholders to understand council decisions, performance and spend

What will we measure?

- Service user satisfaction with the council's online service

offer

- Proportion of the most frequent council transactions completed online
- User satisfaction with libraries and Idea Stores
- Residents' perception of being involved in decision-making
- Residents' perception of being kept informed by the council
- Residents' perception of council transparency

Outcome 10

People say we work together across boundaries in a strong and effective partnership to achieve the best outcomes for our residents



The Tower Hamlets Strategic Partnership brings together key stakeholders to provide and improve services and outcomes for local residents. During the last 12 months partnership working has never been so essential – as the borough continues to respond to the pandemic, while struggling to overcome hardship and loss.

Working collectively with our partners we have shown political and organisational leadership, delivering strong support to residents in a uniquely challenging time. Fundamentally, new ways of working with partners has been rapid, adaptive and responsive.

Leaders from across the borough have collaborated to deliver a wide range of projects to support our community. Two key partnership projects include the Community Testing Programme, which

consists a variety of testing sites, including a mobile testing unit to ensure even more residents are tested for the virus. The more recent Vaccination Programme has also been successful with the help of a shared communication strategy to manage misinformation and increase take-up. Both programmes have harnessed the power of local volunteers.

The Tower Hamlets Plan sets our commitment to work together on shared priorities and outcomes and provides a framework for partnership collaboration. What is most important is the work we do together to facilitate improvements for residents and our ongoing commitment to working together on shared priorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted almost all areas of life and the current climate we are now operating in has meant a shift in the focus of our

collaborative working. While our objectives remain the same, we will all be living and working with COVID-19 for years to come, and our joint focus must be on controlling the virus and protecting our most vulnerable residents.

The Partnership will focus on the economic and social recovery of the borough. Some of their priorities going forward will focus on on-going response to the pandemic, mental health, economic recovery particular supporting people into work and local businesses, lost learning, climate change and ensuring addressing existing inequalities and those exacerbated by the pandemic remain at core of our collective recovery agenda.

Outcome 10

People say we work together across boundaries in a strong and effective partnership to achieve the best outcomes for our residents



What actions will we take?

1. Continue to promote Tower Hamlets as a place and community cohesion through partnership working and campaigns such as #TowerHamletsTogether
2. Work with partners to deliver priorities that focus on the social and economic recovery of the borough
3. Work with partners to mitigate impact of Brexit on communities and stakeholders in Tower Hamlets

4. Improve collaborative working and integration with partners to address inequality in the four priority areas of the Tower Hamlets Plan

What will we measure?

- Children and young people accessing mental health services
- Number of residents supported into employment by the WorkPath partnership
- Resident satisfaction with council and partner response to anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Residential and nursing admissions (over 65s)

Outcome 11

People say we continuously seek innovation and strive for excellence to embed a culture of sustainable improvement



Our aim to embed continuous improvement in the delivery of services is ongoing. We will build upon our pandemic response, bridging the gap between delivering for the 'new normal' of today and having services that are fit for the future.

During the past few months, we have not only adapted, but we have embraced change. Many employees have shifted into more operational roles such as ensuring disadvantaged children have access to laptops and coordinating volunteers. In addition, most of our staff now work from home. After considerable work and determination our 'Smarter Together' programme has staff migrated to Office 365 and a Windows 10 device. Almost 4,000 orientation and learning sessions have been delivered and will

continue throughout the year. Modernising in this way is making out day-to day work more effective and productive.

Although, a high number of staff report that their mental health is good, we know that significant changes to the way we live can have negative consequences. We are creating a culture which is open, unbiased and inclusive when it comes to talking about mental health. Key to this is a variety of professional support and resources, including our mental health first aider network. Our Mental Health First Aiders are colleagues trained to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide support on a first aid basis (in the same way that physical first aider would).

Regarding a more externally focused project, our new Civic Centre will bring benefits to the borough. It will include a £300m university campus, seven new public spaces and 5,000 new jobs. It will be highly accessible, being situated next to the new transport hub in Whitechapel, along with bus and cycle routes. The entire ground floor will be dedicated to public use where residents and local business owners will be able to get things done in one place. It is also sustainable, through the consolidation and redevelopment of other buildings, the move to the new Civic Centre will help create around 700 new homes. After just six years public money will be saved as we will no longer be paying rent at our current Town Hall.

Outcome 11

People say we continuously seek innovation and strive for excellence to embed a culture of sustainable improvement



What actions will we take?

1. As part of our Smarter Together Transformation programme, modernise our core support and enabling functions to improve effectiveness and efficiency
2. Revisit our asset strategy to inform improvements to how we use our land and buildings, supporting the council's wider ambitions of recovery and transformation
3. Implement modern infrastructure to

4. Enable colleagues to work reliably and securely from anywhere
5. Drive and support digital inclusion in the borough
6. Develop and deliver a People & Wellbeing Strategy
7. Realign our budget more closely to the council's revised priorities, whilst responding to the pandemic, staying

remove the technical barriers to the council's ambitions within budget and improving the management of our finances

What will we measure?

- Council staff sickness absence rate
- Council staff turnover rate
- Percentage of top 5% of earners who are women
- Percentage of top 5% of earners who are from black and minority ethnic communities

- Residents' perception of the council doing a better job than last year
- Budget variance for the general fund
- Media and press view of the council



Our Community Engagement Strategy sets out our vision for transparency and openness by encouraging active participation of our residents to influence and shape the borough in which they live and work. We want communities to lead the way in making Tower Hamlets a great place to live and we want communities to have the power to influence issues that affect them the most.

Find out about the latest council news and events by visiting our website:

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Check out our calendar of meetings to find out about upcoming council and committee meetings:

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/meetings

We regularly consult our residents and local businesses about proposals that are likely to impact them:

<https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/>

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