

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.47 P.M. ON MONDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2021

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

Members Present:

Councillor Mohammed Pappu (**Chair**)*

Councillor Bex White (**Vice-Chair**)

– Scrutiny Lead for Children’s and
Education

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

– Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety

Councillor Marc Francis*

Councillor Ehtasham Haque

– Scrutiny Lead for Housing and
Regeneration

Councillor Denise Jones

Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan

– Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults

Councillor Leema Qureshi

– Scrutiny Lead for Resources and
Finance

Councillor Andrew Wood*

Co-opted Members Present:

Halima Islam

– Co-Optee

James Wilson

– Co-Optee

Other Councillors Present:

Mayor John Biggs

Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

Councillor Candida Ronald

Officers Present:

Thorsten Dreyer

– (Head of Intelligence and
Performance)

Afazul Hoque

– (Head of Corporate Strategy &
Policy)

Sharon Godman

– (Director, Strategy, Improvement
and Transformation)

Hitesh Jolapara

– (Interim Divisional Director, Finance,
Procurement & Audit)

Daniel Kerr

– (Strategy and Policy Manager)

Ahsan Khan

– (Chief Accountant)

David Knight

– (Democratic Services Officer,
Committees, Governance)

Clare Matthews	– (Strategy & Policy Manager)
Ann Sutcliffe	– (Corporate Director, Place)
James Thomas	– (Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Will Tuckley	– (Chief Executive)

*Councillors present in person in the Committee Room. (Remaining Councillors attended from remote locations).

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

The following Members for transparency declared a potential interest in relation to Item 9 Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions:

1. Councillor Marc Francis due to his wife Councillor Rachel Blake being the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing; and
2. Councillor Ehtasham Haque due to wife Councillor Sabina Akhtar being the Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit.

2. CHAIRS UPDATE

Councillor Mohammed Pappu (Chair) provided the Committee with the following updates:

- ❖ The latest COVID update information from public health had been **circulated** today by officers and will aim to continue with this for every meeting.
- ❖ The initial governance and scrutiny training session had been **held** and the next training session would be on Monday 4th of October at 6:00 PM on “questioning skills” and it will to be delivered by Sunita Sharma. Ms Sharma is an experienced coach and facilitator with over 30 years’ experience in local government, the private sector, and a variety of other settings. She has been a long-standing associate consultant with Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and has provided invaluable support to the Borough’s elected Members and senior managers. The Chair stressed that engaging in learning, training and development is essential in gaining experience and enabling councillors to fully understand their role and contribute fully to the democratic process. The final session will be on Wednesday, 24th October at 6:00 PM on chairing skills delivered by Ms. Sharma in addition, support will be available to scrutiny leads to help and develop their Chairing skills and the smooth running of the scrutiny sub-committees.
- ❖ **Noted** that following the recent briefing session the report by Savills on the borrowing and investment capacity within the HRA had been circulated and Members were encouraged to consider the responses received.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

3.1 26th July 2021

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

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28th June 2021 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

MATTER ARISING

Minute 3. - Update on attendance at the Mayors Advisory Board (MAB) Improvement Session

The Committee noted that as part of the Council's improvement journey the LGA have agreed to undertake a one-day 'light-touch' Corporate Health Check (CHC) on 28th September 2021

As a result of discussions on the CHC and in response to a request it was noted as part of the planning for this CHC it will be considered if LGA team can come and speak to the Committee or the Chair during the one-day 'light-touch'.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil items

5. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY REPORTING - Q1 2021/22

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the Council's performance against the performance indicators included in the Councils Strategic Plan in quarter 1 of 2021/22. The main points of the discussion and questions arising may be summarised as follows.

The Committee:

- ❖ **Welcomed** the new, easier-to-read format of the report.
- ❖ **Heard** that the current government-funded early years childcare to disadvantaged families had been specifically targeted at reducing the early years attainment gap and was intended to better prepare

disadvantaged children for the start of formal schooling. However, it was recognised that it is also important to ensure children have a healthy and balanced diet in their early years as this gives their bodies a chance to properly grow; children need carbohydrates for their energy and protein for their muscle growth and to strengthen their immune systems. Therefore, LBTH was looking at how to make this offer more appealing to both families and providers.

- ❖ **Noted** that with regard to sickness absence a measurement of absence within the organisation is necessary when deciding on the need for, or setting, an absence target. Although having a target in place will not reduce absence in its own right, it plays an essential element in any overall absence management programme.
- ❖ **Noted** that the Borough's current level recycling was due to a combination of factors, particularly the impact of recycling contamination on the performance figure (**e.g.** when materials are sorted into the wrong recycling bin, or when materials are not properly cleaned). It was felt to be important to look at how the Council and its partner agencies can change people's attitudes to recycling (**e.g.** what do residents need to know/receive/be made aware of). In addition, waste collections may be delayed as regular staff are absent due to illness and/or self-isolation. In addition, whilst agency staff are in place to provide the usual service, it was noted that there may be delays to normal collection days and time.
- ❖ **Agreed** that if the Council is to increase the percentage that is being recycled it needs to collaborate with the people and businesses of Tower Hamlets and provide leadership to businesses, housing associations and others that have a responsibility for managing waste.
- ❖ **Noted** that Tower Hamlets has the highest density of housing in London and the population continues to grow. This provides an additional challenge as recycling rates are lower from flats compared to kerbside properties and over 80 per cent of properties in Tower Hamlets are flats.
- ❖ **Noted** that only 32.6 percent of senior staff are BAME, equating to just over sixty-eight full time equivalent staff and whilst a target for this measure has not yet been set the staff profile needs to be a proper reflection of the communities that the Council seeks to serve and this needs to be addressed. However, on the 27th October 2021 the Cabinet will be considering the recommendations of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Action Plan that address this particular matter.
- ❖ **Stated** that Scrutiny needs to be more involved in a timely fashion target setting as it has an essential role to play in improving services, to help better understand local people and to support the Mayor and the Executive in making robust judgements about its priorities.
- ❖ **Requested** for an update on the questions raised prior to the summer recess regarding the Performance Measures Numbers (**34**); Level of public realm cleanliness; (**35**) Level of CO2 emissions generated by the council's activities; (**36**) Level of household recycling; (**40**) Residents' satisfaction with the area as a place to live; (**63**) Residents' perception

of being involved in decision-making; and **(65)** Residents' perception of council transparency.

- ❖ **Accepted** that the Council need staff to continue to function and manage the increasing need for services and information whilst dealing with their own personal situations and emotions, which could result in long-term sickness absence, either now or when the crisis has passed.
- ❖ **Noted** that in regard to the house-building targets for homes built in LBTH, the Council are serious about meeting its housing need and understand that this is the starting point for establishing the requirement through the local plan, but it is critical to be clear that must be the right starting point, backed by evidence.
- ❖ **Agreed** that it would be helpful that such external targets have clear explanations within the performance reports. This would ensure that the Committee would be aware of the full range of targets both internal and external that the Council has to address.

Following a full and wide-ranging discussion, the Chair thanked all those Committee Members in attendance together with (i) John Biggs, Executive Mayor; (ii) Will Tuckley Chief Executive; (iii) Thorsten Dreyer, Head of Intelligence and Performance for their contributions to the discussions on this critical issue.

Accordingly, the Committee **resolved**:

1. Welcome the greater clarity now contained within the report on the Council's performance against the relevant indicators.
2. To note the Quarter 1 summary status, performance of the strategic measures at the end of Q1, and to note progress and challenges in regard to delivery and performance (**e.g.** Why not every target is achieved).
3. Those areas of concern (**e.g.** deficient performance) in developing per-decision scrutiny questions (**Item 6.4 refers**).
4. To request an update on the questions raised regarding Performance Measures Numbers **34**; Level of public realm cleanliness; **35** Level of CO2 emissions generated by the council's activities; **36** Level of household recycling; **40** Residents' satisfaction with the area as a place to live; **63** Residents' perception of being involved in decision-making; and **65** Residents' perception of council transparency.

6.2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2021-22 PERIOD 3

The Committee received a report that (i) presented the budget monitoring report 2021-22 as of 30th June 2021 for the General Fund, Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), (ii) detailed progress made against savings targets and the Council's capital programme; and (iii) provided projections on General Fund earmarked reserves and the forecast impacts of Covid on the Councils finances in 2021-22. A summary of the discussions and questions raised is set out below:

The Committee

- ❖ **Observed** that the report is going to Cabinet on 22nd September 2021 see following [link](#)
- ❖ **Noted** that the projection for the General Fund outturn is for an overspend of £0.1m, which already considers the use of some earmarked reserves in delivering services (i.e. without the use of these reserves there would be a higher forecast overspend).
- ❖ **Noted** that given the latest forecast financial position, earmarked General Fund reserves are consequently projected to reduce; from £173m to £166m by the end of this fiscal year.
- ❖ **Accepted** that it is important to note that the reserves position of the Council is uncertain pending the closure of the statement of accounts for the period 2016 – 2021.
- ❖ **Noted** that the Councils budget has been stretched for some time, but the pandemic has exacerbated the situation. It has increased the amount that the Council has had to spend on protecting the most vulnerable residents and sets the Borough on a path to rebuild and reboot for a fairer future.
- ❖ In response to questions raised regarding the current interest rates and inflation **noted** that the Council has modelled the current and anticipated funding available for individual services within the projected resource constraint (**e.g.** sources of council revenue, including grants, local taxes, fees and charges, investment income).
- ❖ **Noted** that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is subject to a regular review and as part of that process the Council maintains an in-year contingency to address any 'budget short fall' and reserves can be used on a one-off basis.
- ❖ **Asked** if an analysis could be provided on the impact of inflation on contracts especially if inflation remains at its current level.
- ❖ **Stated** that there would benefit in undertaking a benchmarking exercise in the autumn in relation to the New Homes Bonus. This exercise should primarily look at what assumptions have other boroughs made in their MTFS in relation to New Homes Bonus.
- ❖ **Stated** that it would be useful to know what will the impact be of the National Insurance increase for Health & Social Care have on the Council both as an employer and as purchaser of services? As this information would then help to inform scrutiny of the budgetary process prior to the publication of firm and detailed spending proposals.
- ❖ **Noted** that the Place Directorate is forecasting a £4.8m adverse variance before proposed reserve drawdowns. The Directorate is projecting to drawdown £5.6m from agreed and ringfenced reserves, identified during the budget setting process, resulting in a net underspend after reserves of £0.8m. The reserves that are planned to be used form part of the Directorate's budget and are not being used to offset a general overspend. Other reserves are funding target and approved projects such as clearing fly tipped materials at Ailsa Wharf £475k from the services reserve, replacing trees or upgrades to the vehicle workshop to allow the £23k capital receipt on that site's disposal.
- ❖ **Indicated** that as the Council has a property portfolio and it would be helpful to have details of those assets to get a better understanding as

to **(i)** the physical assets the Council has; **(ii)** what is being done with them; **(iii)** what are the costs either direct costs or income from those buildings.

- ❖ Was **advised** that the closure of leisure centres to mitigate Covid-19, had, had an impact on the Council's leisure service contract provider, Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL). It was **noted** that a management fee had been allocated to GLL for the period March – August 2020 to ensure the continued operation of the leisure service within Tower Hamlets. GLL are now in principal confident that they can repay that management fee in full and it is not anticipated that there will be a need for any further budget provision to support GLL.

Following a full and wide-ranging discussion, the Chair thanked all those Committee Members in attendance together with (i) Councillor Candida Ronald (Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector); (ii) Hitesh Jolapara Interim Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit; (iii) Ahsan Khan, Chief Accountant; (iv) James Thomas (Corporate Director for Children & Culture) for their contributions to the deliberations on this significant topic.

Accordingly, the Committee **resolved** to:

1. **Note** the Council's progress and position to date on its P3 budget monitoring report; and
2. **Note** the areas of concern (**e.g.** revenue overspends, savings target) in developing scrutiny questions.
3. **Agree** that an analysis should be provided on the impact of inflation on contracts especially if inflation remains at its current level.
4. **Agree** that as the Council has a property portfolio and it would be helpful to have details of those properties to get a better understanding as to (i) the physical assets the Council has; (ii) what is being done with them; (iii) what are the costs either direct costs or income from those buildings.
5. **Agree** that there would benefit in undertaking a benchmarking exercise in the autumn in relation to the New Homes Bonus. This exercise should primarily look at what assumptions have other boroughs made in their MTFS in relation to New Homes Bonus.
6. **Agree** that it wished to receive a report on the impact be of the National Insurance increase for Health & Social Care have on the Council both as an employer and as purchaser of services? As this information would then help to inform scrutiny of the budgetary process prior to the publication of firm and detailed spending proposals.

6.3 DIGITAL INCLUSION

The Committee received a presentation that outlined a summary of the work undertaken to date for the development of policy to address digital exclusion including working with key stakeholders/ partners, using different resources, approach for upskilling local people. The main points arising from the discussion and the questions raised may be summarised as followed:

The Committee:

- ❖ **Agreed** that there is a need to understand and better coordinate these activities to strengthen this work, avoid duplication, identify specific gaps in provision and to sign post people in user friendly language.
- ❖ **Observed** that there are a broad range of initiatives taking place across Tower Hamlets which aim to improve digital inclusion. Many of these began as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ **Agreed** that there is a need to understand and better coordinate these activities to strengthen this work, avoid duplication and identify specific gaps in provision.
- ❖ **Agreed** that achieving digital inclusion in Tower Hamlets should be considered that as an essential element in creating a fairer environment in terms of both money and jobs.
- ❖ **Agreed** that the Borough will not effectively tackle poverty nor maximise access to job opportunities without reducing the number of people who cannot access the internet.
- ❖ **Agreed** that Digital inclusion is about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone and effectively signposted.
- ❖ **Stated** that digitally excluded people can lack skills, confidence, and motivation, along with having limited or no access to equipment and connectivity. This can create additional layers of social exclusion which can exacerbate social and economic problems. Whereas getting online is usually life-enhancing and it can be life-changing!
- ❖ **Indicated** that digital inclusion is not only about whether people can access the internet it is also about how user-friendly web sites are **e.g.** Tower Hamlets Connect digital portal has been launched. It includes user-friendly information on money management, debt and paying bills, with links to local information and advice..
- ❖ **Stated** that it is important the Council places the voices of local people at the heart of any digital inclusion stratagem. This needs to remain community based in character, not technological and that it is explicitly in meeting the needs of citizens and communities.
- ❖ **Indicated** it should not be ignored that having a strong social network is crucial for health and well-being regardless of age **e.g.** actually going somewhere having a conversation about a transaction is actually a really important social interaction. Hence there needs to be a balance between making sure that people are digitally enabled but also that the provision to support people who prefer to have those face-to-face conversations.
- ❖ **Stated** that organisations need to be doing more in order to make sure that their services are more user friendly and to maintain a strong element of social interaction in delivering services.
- ❖ **Noted** that the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) is working to get all Londoners online with an emphasis on helping those who face the biggest challenges. LOTI is also as part of this process undertaking a mapping exercise to identify what are the needs across London and the solutions being developed to address those issues.

For example: (i) parental support provided by schools to access the internet; (ii) knowing what current partners are already doing and what they have to offer; (iii) how the specific needs of individual are being understood and met **e.g.** training and developing awareness around safeguarding ; and (iv) how agencies are finding ways to work together to resource provision and plug any gaps.

- ❖ **Observed** that the review also drew on the findings of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission, the Council's Covid Impact Assessment, and work underway to develop a digital inclusion action plan.
- ❖ **Agreed** that a highly effective way to help digitally excluded people is to potentially offer small grants for 3rd Sector providers to offer training and up skilling (**e.g.** those who have basic digital skills and connectivity but lack the confidence and knowledge to make the most of the digital economy, whether at work or beyond).
- ❖ **Agreed** that whilst there are lots of benefits when using social media it is important to put in place robust safeguarding measures (**e.g.** procedures that should support the use of social media and other online services).
- ❖ **Agreed** it was of benefit to have guidebook that provided a multilingual and straightforward walkthrough on the use of ICT tools.
- ❖ **Agreed** of the benefit of funding a digital library within the Borough to help residents who want to do things online but are unable to do so as they have no way of accessing the internet or do not have enough devices within a household or the right device for the task in hand.
- ❖ **Agreed** that schemes should be advanced to reuse and recycle digital equipment which can be repurposed to help address the digital divide, as the offering of digital equipment and support will increase accessibility for many without access to a device or connectivity at home.
- ❖ **Noted** that at Cabinet on the 22nd of September, 2021 will be considering a report on a Poverty Review which had focused on interventions designed to address poverty and recommends a series of actions to support residents to recover from the financial impact of the pandemic.
- ❖ As a result of further questioning **noted** that the review had been informed by engagement and consultation with residents and partners, and relevant data, research, and evaluation, including a poverty profile and mapping of council-supported poverty interventions.
- ❖ **Noted** that Councillor Bex White (Scrutiny Lead for Children and Education) and Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults had been involved in discussion with Councillor Mufeedah Bustin (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion) about the emerging findings around children's and adults related issues. However, Councillor Bustin stated that she was happy to have a broader discussion with a wider group of members on the recommendations within the report. In addition, the Chair stated that he would raise the Committees concerns with the Mayor.
- ❖ **Expressed** concern that with the Universal Credit (UC) uplift introduced in March 2020 in response to coronavirus expiring at the

end of September 2021 will impact on those residents in greatest need. This will be further exacerbated by the (i) end of the Furlough Scheme that casts a worrying shadow over the prospects of many who might now be looking for work, particularly in the Borough; and (ii) increase in utility bills as low-income, multifamily, and renting households spend a much larger percentage of their income on energy bills than the average family. Therefore, it is important to make sure that those residents who need the most support are aware of what support that they are entitled to and where they can go to access that help.

Following a full and wide-ranging discussion, the Chair thanked Councillor Mufeedah Bustin (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion); Clare Matthews (Strategy & Policy Manager) and all Committee Members in attendance for their contributions to the discussions on this issue.

Accordingly, the Committee **resolved** to::

1. **Note** the work undertaken so far in developing its approach to digital inclusion; and gaps identified for inclusion into the digital inclusion policy; and
2. **Request** further updates on digital inclusion.

6.4 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

Following comments by the Committee the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions (PDSQ) Members **agreed** the particular questions/recommendations that they wanted to raise with Cabinet on the 28th of July 2021 (**See attached appendix**).

7. UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

The Committee received and noted the updates from the Scrutiny Lead Members. Arising out of discussions on these updates it was noted that Councillor Faroque Ahmed (Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety) had participated in the recent Tower Hamlets Tension Monitoring Group and that the Council, police, community, and faith leaders are working closely to provide community reassurance around three serious incidents that have taken place in recent weeks in Tower Hamlets. In addition, Councillor Ahmed advised the Committee that he was convening a Challenge Session on the 30th of September 2021.

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

With no other business to discuss the Chair called this meeting to a close; thanked all those attending for their contributions and informed the Committee that the next meeting would be on Monday, 20th of September 2021.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

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

Nil item

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

Nil items

The meeting ended at 9.03 p.m.

**Chair, Councillor Mohammed Pappu
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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Questions	Response
Item 6.1 Understanding the impact of Covid-19 in Tower Hamlets – Follow Up	
<p>1. Impact on local authority finances and services says on p59 <i>"Early in the pandemic, the Government pledged to provide 'whatever it takes' to local authorities to cover the cost of dealing with the crisis. However, there is feedback in the sector that this commitment has not yet been fulfilled."</i> What was the surplus on COVID grants reported at the end of 2020/21?</p>	<p>The Council had £8.4m of Contain Outbreak Management Fund, £3.5m of non-ringfenced Covid emergency grant and £2.6m of Council Tax Hardship Fund which were reported as unallocated in the 2020-21 provisional outturn report to Cabinet on 28/7/21. These grant amounts have been carried forward to 2021-22 for ongoing expenditure and reduced income.</p>
<p>2. Given that suicide rates did not increase (which seems to be matched by global analysis) how sure are we that mental health did get worse as the report implies? - how much of the activity this year is a cumulative catch up and how much is a genuinely new demand for mental health services? It would have been really useful to see a month by month change in various MH statistics from before the pandemic to now.</p>	<p>There are indications and evidence that mental health worsened due to the pandemic: For example, as mentioned in Appendix I, 63% of respondents in the June 2020 LBTH Covid Impact Resident survey said the pandemic had a negative impact on their mental health.</p> <p>Information on the month-to-month change in demand for mental health services before the pandemic and after it started was recently presented to Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting on 16 September 2021 and is available to view here. This includes information on month-by-month A&E attendance /liaison psychiatry, the number of calls to the Mental Health Crisis Line, the number of referrals to Community Mental Health Teams and referrals to Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies; from 2019 to 2021.</p> <p>This data does not distinguish between new demand for mental health and demand from existing mental health service users, though new referrals typically relate to new demand. Feedback from staff working on mental health is that people's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in some experiencing mental illness for the first time, and some with existing problems finding their symptoms worsening.</p>
Item 6.2 LB Tower Hamlets Poverty Review	

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<p>1. There are several mentions of language barriers in the report, for example p25 <i>"Digital exclusion and language barriers were a major topic of discussion in focus groups."</i> but none of the findings relate to the poor written and spoken English of too many residents, but as the report says p27 <i>"Moving into work has a strong poverty payoff"</i> - why was teaching English not one of the findings as that would greatly broaden the range of jobs available?</p>	<p>The review team heard about the support provided by WorkPath to residents who face barriers to work, and – as part of this discussion - about the new ESOL and Functional Skills programme launched in September 2020.</p> <p>The report recommends a partnership programme to improve skills and access to decent work with opportunities for progression. Some residents on low incomes face multiple barriers to work and we recognise that improving English language skills will be an important part of tackling these barriers, alongside other issues identified in the review discussions including caring responsibilities, income maximisation, skills, confidence, and uncertainty about the impact of working on benefits entitlements.</p>
<p>2. How much additional funding has so far been earmarked to tackle poverty in Tower Hamlets as a result the Poverty Review?</p> <p style="text-align: left; font-size: small;">Page 14</p>	<p>The purpose of the review was to make recommendations to inform future poverty reduction interventions by the council and its partners. Following discussion at Cabinet, there will be a process of planning which will consider resource implications.</p>
<p>Item 6.3 Strategic delivery and performance reporting – Q1 2021/22</p>	
<p>1. Measure Number 73 - What % of staff paid over £60k p.a. are BAME? as I believe we track this number internally</p>	<p>We use the top 5% measure as a strategic indicator because it is a well-established former best value performance indicator that is still used by many local authorities. The top 5% measure is used for benchmarking our performance against others. We provide top 5% data to the LGA and we publicly report it in our gender (and ethnicity) pay gap report, too.</p> <p>The starting salary for top 5% of staff is lower and therefore the number of staff in that band is higher.</p> <p>Top 5% of staff that are BAME (June 2021)</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32.6 percent of our senior staff are BAME • FTE: just over 68 full time equivalent staff. • Top 5% salary: ca. £55k in June 2021. Top 5% can vary slightly over the course of the year and from year to year. <p>% of staff paid over £60k that are BAME (June 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29.3 percent of staff earning £60k+ are BAME • FTE: just under 45 full time equivalent staff.
<p>2. Paragraph 3.13 Indicators that are falling short of the minimum expectation highlights</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;"><u>Health, social care and safeguarding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are more independent after being supported through reablement services • People using social care who receive direct payments as part of self-direct support <p>OSC had a call-in on day ops last municipal year so do you think that the resulting decisions taken at the time has led to impacting this target negatively? Is this something that needs reflecting on for reconsideration?</p>	<p>In quarter 1, 47.5% of people were more independent following a period of reablement (54 out of 114), against a target of 75%. In the previous quarter this was 55%. New hospital discharge arrangements from September 2020 introduced a “discharge to assess” approach. Combined with the impact of the pandemic, we are seeing people leaving hospital at an earlier stage and with increased needs, complexity, and dependency. These needs are not always the right fit for a short term reablement service however, ensuring a good quality service for everyone who can benefit from effective rehabilitation and reablement; remains a priority for the Council and the NHS. (As it is practice week, you may like to view this short film featuring an Occupational Therapist from Reablement interviewed by one of our Service Managers – Consolate talks about a case example and the importance of communication):</p> <p> Consolate - Reablement and the importance of Communication.mp4</p> <p>The number of people receiving a Direct Payment to arrange their own care and support was 583 at the end of quarter 1 (there were 25 new direct payment arrangements during this period however 28 ceased). Our target for this year is 650 however there has been a net decrease in the last six months. Work continues to improve awareness and promote Direct Payments and ensure that processes for setting them up are straightforward. Support is available to those who choose</p>

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	<p>to arrange their care and support in this way and Direct Payments give people with care and support needs greater choice and control.</p> <p>We do not consider there is a direct correlation between changes to day services and the above indicators. Changes to day services had a positive impact in that there are 2 new Direct Payment arrangements as a result of these changes.</p>
<p>Item 6.4 Budget monitoring report 2021-22 as at 30th June 2021 (period 3)</p>	
<p>1. Hadley House fire costs which are not covered by the Council's insurance policy. Is that an external policy or the £10 million earmarked reserve we hold for self-insurance?</p>	<p>A claim has been lodged against an external insurance policy. Costs not covered by the policy will need to be borne by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p>
<p>2. Appendix A p25 "This forecast also includes a Fire Safety team that are undertaking and documenting the results of fire risk surveys on the external walls of privately-owned high-rise properties. In 2021/22 this team will be funded from EWS grant that has been held in reserve specifically for this project and will therefore not impact on the forecast outturn" how much and from whom is this EWS grant?</p>	<p>The EWS funding formed part of the New Burdens money received by LBTH from MHCLG and totalled £275,773. This money was not drawn down and used in 2020/21 due to the outturn position of the Authority and has been carried forward on the balance sheet to be applied in 2021/22 to fund the fire safety team. This is General Fund spend and the MHCLG funding is forecast to be used in full during the year.</p>
<p>Item 6.5 New Electric Vehicle Charging Delivery Plan 2021-2025 and funding towards new public charging points.</p>	
<p>1. The £500k CIL will help generate annual profits of over £500k by 2025 - why is it appropriate to use CIL rather than borrowing to create an income generating asset which will so quickly pay for itself?</p>	<p>Borrowing is the last resort if there is no identified funding that can be used for projects. In this case, the installation of EV charging infrastructure falls within the intended uses of CIL funding.</p>
<p>2. Will LBTH be installing EV chargers on THH estate car parks?</p>	<p>Yes, some site THH sites are included in a list of identified sites.</p>

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<p>3. When, how many & where will LBTH be installing EV chargers for its own vehicles own its own land?</p>	<p>There is a project to install charging points within council depots to support electrification of the council's fleet. It is estimated these will be installed in 1st quarter of financial year 22/23:</p> <p>Each charger can charge two vehicles:</p> <p>Poplar Recreation Ground – 5 chargers</p> <p>Vehicles relocated from the Car Pound, location TBC assumed Blackwall– 10 chargers (10 for Parking/Trading Standards, 10 for Pest Control). Mopeds can only be charged with a standard domestic plug and do not require charging infrastructure, however plug sockets need to be supplied!</p> <p>Toby Lane – 15 chargers (5 for Catering, 25 for Passenger)</p> <p>Victoria Park (excluding St Marks Yard) - 2 chargers</p> <p>Toby Club - 6 chargers</p> <p>Blackwall – Up to 46 chargers the figure includes vehicles displaced from the Town Hall.</p>
<p>4. Why are rapid charging points not being considered for residential charging or across the board instead of having several types of charging?</p>	<p>The space required for rapid chargers often makes them difficult to fit on residential streets. They are also much more expensive often costing 5 times as much as standard fast chargers (£35,000-£40,000).</p> <p>Furthermore, there are widespread concerns that frequent rapid charging impacts on battery life span. They are more suited for occasional use or to satisfy the needs of high mileage users such as</p>

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	Taxi's and commercial vehicles.
5. Could these charging points have an impact on current residents parking spaces?	Not all charging points would have dedicated charging bays. But charging points that did have them, would be used by residents that are freeing up parking spaces in the area to charge.
6. "3.8 260 7kw fast chargers will cost around £2,000,000" or £7,692 per charger - this seems excessive given that the retail price of such a charger is under £1k	Around £7000 is the usual overall cost of installation, grid, and the costs of the charging point. It can cost more depending the costs of connecting to the grid.
7. Would residents need permission from LBTH to instal their own chargers on street in their front or back garden?	No
8. Are 1,100 chargers going to be sufficient for 6,000 vehicles? Some residents may leave their vehicles in the space located next to the charger for days at a time if they do not use a car daily – meaning there will be limited turnover of spaces.	We monitor for this occurring. This hasn't happened for the 80-lamp column and 24 fast chargers we already have in operation. One potential solution if overstaying were to occur would be a fee to discourage it.
9. What is the assumption that a 6:1 ratio of vehicles to chargers is sufficient based on? Early adopters of EVs may be more frequent users of vehicles, so current usage is not necessarily indicative of future usage. Does the council have data on how long the average car in the borough remains in its space?	In its calculations of the number of charging stations needed in the future, the International Energy Association (IEA) has recommended on a European level a ratio of 10 EVs to 1 charging connection. On that basis the current levels of EVs in the Borough would require 100. We currently have just over 100 with a further 80 which are already commissioned and due to be available in October. This will be followed by another 150 lamp column chargers by the end of March 2022 taking

	the total to more than 300.
<p>Item 6.9 Lease Renewal at Sutton Street Depot, 6 Sutton Street, London, E1 0AY</p>	
<p>1. “...1.3 However, on expiry of the lease, the Council did not seek possession to recover the property and the tenant remained in occupation.” why did the Council not seek possession in June 2018 and then left the site unused for 3+ years?</p>	<p>At the expiry of the previous lease the Council reviewed options for the site and concluded a renewal with the existing tenant would best serve its short-term interests, while retaining flexibility for the medium term. The lease negotiations included agreement on works to be undertaken, and it is not unusual for lease negotiations of this complexity to take an extended period. Because of the complexities of landlord and tenant legislation we were limited in our ability to charge the tenant rent during the negotiating period, as this would have risked granting them greater security of tenure.</p>

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