

Committee OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	Date 6th March, 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 6.2
Report of: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		Title: REPORT "CALLED IN" – Disposal of Poplar Baths (CAB 137/067)		
Originating Officer(s): Angus Dixon		Ward(s) affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007 but has been "Called In" for further consideration by Councillors Mamun Rashid, Fozol Miah, Lufta Begum, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report (CAB 137/067)
dated 7th February, 2007**

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

**Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007. It however has been “Called In” for further consideration by Councillors Mamun Rashid, Fozol Miah, Lufta Begum, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-

1. That the disposal of the Poplar Baths site, for redevelopment on the open market, be deferred for a period of 6 months, to allow for further detailed work to be completed by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust and Swan Housing Association (on behalf of the Poplar Baths Steering Group), in partnership with the Authority and to a set of agreed milestones.

4. THE “CALL IN” REQUISITION

4.1 The reasons advanced in the “Call In” requisition are set out below:-

It is unacceptable to sell this valuable local facility. The six months delay in disposal is welcome, but the passive failure of the Council to work for a constructive outcome is elaborated in the report.

The Council needs to give a clear, unequivocal commitment to the people of Poplar that it will work with all necessary partners and agencies to ensure that a swimming pool is reopened on the current site. Anything less will be a betrayal of local people and the sporting principles of the Olympics as we approach 2012. Any further delay and uncertainty will also serve to emphasise the appalling mismanagement of this issue by the Council over the last decade.

5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

5.1 In accordance with the Committee’s procedures, the “Call In” Members have provided an alternative course of action for consideration:-

“Councillors make the following recommendations:

1. The Council must actively pursue the desired outcome of reopening the pool at Poplar Baths as a leisure facility for the local community.
2. To this end, grant a temporary licence to the Environment Trust (or another committed partner) of up to two years. This will have the dual effect of allowing the organisation time and access to seriously undertake the project and deter potential speculative development interest.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE “CALL IN”

6.1 The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the “Call In”.

- (a) Presentation of the “Call In” by one of the “Call In” Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 6 June, 2006, the “Call In” Members are not allowed to participate in the general debate.

- 6.2 It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet’s provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.