

Cabinet 9 July 2014	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Robert McCulloch-Graham, Corporate Director Education, Social Care & Wellbeing	Classification: Unrestricted
Review of the Council's Discretionary Awards Determination for the 2014/15 financial year and discretionary award policies.	

Lead Member	Councillor Gulam Robbani, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Originating Officer(s)	Anne Canning, Service Head Learning and Achievement Early Years Diane Warne, Head of Secondary Learning and Achievement
Wards affected	All wards
Community Plan Theme	A Prosperous Community
Key Decision?	Yes

Executive Summary

This report seeks the level of Discretionary Award Determination Cabinet wishes to take up and reviews the Council's discretionary awards policies, i.e. the Mayor's Education Award, 16-19 Further Education Transport Policy, School Clothing Grant Policy and Budget Holders Lead Professional Scheme.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree that the Council takes up the power to make discretionary awards in respect of specified groups of students over compulsory school age in 2014/2015.
2. Approve the policy in Appendix 1 for the provision by the Council of school clothing grants in 2014/2015 within the budget specified in paragraph 5.2 of this report.
3. Approve the policy in Appendix 2 for the provision of the Budget Holding Lead Professional Scheme for Attendance Support in 2014/2015 within the budget specified in paragraph 5.2 of this report.
4. Approve the policy in Appendix 3 for the provision by the Council of discretionary awards in support of education travel in 2014/2015 within the budget specified in paragraph 5.2 of this report.
5. Approve the policy in Appendix 4 for the provision by the Council of the

Mayor's Education Award (MEA) in 2014/2015 if Cabinet wishes the scheme to continue having determined that funding is available to support applicants for the academic year 2014-15 .

6. Approve the policy in Appendix 5 for the provision of the Mayor's Higher Education Award Scheme in 2014/2015 if Cabinet wishes the scheme to continue and has funds to support it.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council has power by virtue of section 518 of the Education Act 1996 and in circumstances specified in regulations to grant scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries and other allowances in respect of persons over compulsory school age. The Local Education Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 1999 require the Council as local education authority to consider in each financial year whether it will grant scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries and other allowances to persons over compulsory school age and, if so, whether to exercise the power generally or only in respect of persons who satisfy determined criteria. The Council should make its determination annually by the 31st March.
- 1.2 Since 2000/01 Cabinet has determined to exercise the power only in respect of certain groups of students. This allows the Directorate to direct funds towards areas of identified need, and is the recommended option.
- 1.3 Cabinet is asked to review the discretionary award schemes shown below, and to note the minor change requested in the Mayor's Education Award Policy.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet has the options not to take up discretionary award powers in which case it could not run the Mayor's Education Award. Alternatively, the Council might choose to make discretionary awards generally which means that it would have to accept and consider applications for support for a wide spectrum of courses from diverse residents aged over 16. It is considered that such an approach would not provide an appropriately robust foundation on which to grant or refuse requests. The policies appended to the report are considered to offer the fairest means of disbursing limited funds.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Cabinet undertakes the review of its discretionary awards schemes on an annual basis taking into account the budget available and any policy changes requested.

- 3.2. The expected budget provision for the 2014/15 financial year is set out below.

Table 1: Funding for each grant scheme 2013/14 and 2014/15

Grant scheme	Budget 2013/14 £'000	Budget 2014/15 £'000
School clothing grants	201	201
Budget holding lead professionals scheme	21	21
16-19 further education transport support	5	5
Mayor's Education Award	410	272
Mayor's Higher Education Award	630	630
Total	1,267	1,129

4. THE DIRECTORATE'S PROPOSED DISCRETIONARY AWARDS SCHEMES FOR THE 2013/14 ACADEMIC YEAR

4.1 School Clothing Grant Policy

- 4.2. The Council has power under section 518 of the Education Act 1996 and the Local Education Authority (Payment of School Expenses) Regulations 1999 to pay expenses to enable a child attending a maintained school to take part in any school activity. The Council may make such a payment where satisfied that it should be made to relieve financial hardship, but the payment must be related to the means of the child's parents. 2,012 awards were made under this scheme in the 2013/14 academic year. There are no revisions required to the policy which appears at Appendix 1.

4.3. Budget Holding Lead Professional Scheme for Attendance Support

- 4.4. This scheme is regarded as being an extremely effective form of targeted intervention that has had a positive effect on the lives of the children supported. No changes are proposed to this scheme which is set out in Appendix 2.

4.5. 16-19 Further Education Travel Policy

- 4.6. The Council has power under section 508C of the Education Act 1996 to make such school travel arrangements as it considers necessary for the purpose of facilitating a child's attendance at any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child. This power relates to children who are not eligible children within the meaning of Schedule 35B to the Education Act 1996 (and in respect of whom the Council has a duty). The arrangements that may be made include payment of the whole or any part, as the Council thinks fit, of a person's reasonable travelling expenses.

- 4.7. No change is proposed in the Further Education Travel Policy. The proposed policy is shown at Appendix 3.
- 4.8. **The Mayor's Education Award**
- 4.9. The Mayor's Education Award commenced in the 2011/12 academic year. Eligible students receive grants of £400 per year paid in two tranches of £200. Approximately 2,000 applications were received and 1,300 students were supported by the Scheme in the 2012/13 academic year.
- 4.10. The MEA scheme was designed to assist student taking courses of full-time education of at least one year's duration. The scheme contributes to the Prosperous Community theme by delivering financial support to families in need, increasing the ability of their young people to take part fully in further education
- 4.11. The MEA scheme is due to end in summer 2014 as there are no further funds available for it. If the scheme was to continue the Council would need to set aside funding at least as estimated for 2013-14. However, a policy for the 2014/15 academic year is shown at Appendix 4 in the event that Cabinet wishes to scheme to continue and has funds to allow it to do so.

5. The Mayor's Higher Education Award

- 5.1 The MHEA scheme is designed to give awards of £1,500 to 400 students in the first year of a higher education undergraduate course. The purpose of the scheme is to mitigate the high cost associated with higher education.
- 5.2 The scheme is aimed at young people up to the age of 24, with an exception for students having had an SEN statement up to the age of 16 or 19 as necessary and for students receiving Disability Living Allowance. These two groups of students can apply up to the age of 25.
- 5.3 Over 800 applications were made for the scheme and 400 awards were offered. Payments commenced in February 2014. Approximately 5% of applicants offered support were not in attendance and the awards were put aside to be offered to applicants whose priority had been too low to be offered an award in the first instance. Although attempts will be made to allocate all awards, there is an expectation that 5% of awards will remain unused at the end of the 2013/14 academic year.
- 5.4 The scheme is only due to run in the 2013/14 academic year, with half of the award per individual being paid in February 2014 and the remaining half in February 2015. However, a policy for the 2014/15

academic year is shown at Appendix 5 in the event that Cabinet wishes the scheme to continue and has funds to allow it to do so.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 6.1 The funding for these discretionary awards is available at the level indicated in the report in the 2014/15 budget. The exception is that there is a forecast variance of £0.128m against the Mayor's Education Award on the figures in **Table 2** below. This will need to be funded from reserves if take-up is at this level.
- 6.2 The Mayor's Education Award scheme ceases at the end of 2013/14 academic year (i.e. summer 2014) and there is no funding beyond then for that scheme.
- 6.3 The Mayor's Higher Education Award operates for two academic years from autumn 2013, with the first payment in February 2014. The funding is sufficient to pay for 400 awards per year plus £30k administration costs. The illustration of the activity and costs are in Table 3.

Table 2: Activity and costs on Mayor's Education Award since its introduction.

Financial year	2011/12	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		Total
Year	Jan-12 Actual 11/12 ay*	Apr-12 Actual 11/12 ay	Jan-13 Actual 12/13 ay	Apr-13 Estimate 12/13 ay	Jan-14 Estimate 13/14 ay	Apr-14 Estimate 13/14 ay	Jan-15 Estimate	
Total eligible	650	889	1,135	1,050	1,350	1,350		
Admin cost	£0.020m	£0.020m	£0.020m	£0.020m	£0.020m	£0.020m		
Total cost (ie eligible x £200 per instalment)	£0.150m	£0.198m	£0.247m	£0.230m	£0.290m	£0.290m		
Revised Financial Year cost	£0.150m	£0.445m		£0.520m		£0.290m		£1.369m
Budget	£0.150m	£0.445m		£0.410m		£0.272m		£1.277m
Variance	0	0		+£0.110m		+£0.018m		+£0.128m

*ay Academic year payments Jan and April (crossing financial years)

Table 3: Activity and costs on Mayor's Higher Education Award scheme

Financial year	2013/14	2014/15		2015/16	
Year	Estimated 13/14 ay	Estimated 13/14 ay	Estimated 14/15 ay	Estimated 14/15 ay	
Total eligible	400	400	400	400	
Admin cost	£0.015m	£0.015m	£0.015m	£0.015m	
Total cost (ie eligible x £750 per instalment, or £1,500 per academic year)	£0.300m	£0.300m	£0.300m	£0.300m	
Original Budget allocation	£0.630m	£0.630m		Nil	
Revised Financial Year cost	£0.315m	£0.630m		£0.315m	

7. LEGAL COMMENTS

7.1 The Council is empowered by section 518 of the Education Act 1996 to make payments, in circumstances prescribed by regulations, to enable a person to take advantage of educational facilities that are available to them.

Such payments may consist of –

- A post-compulsory education award, which may be a scholarship, an exhibition, a bursary or any other allowance.
- Payment of such expenses of attending a community, foundation, voluntary or special school as may be necessary to enable them to take part in school activities.

7.2 The Local Education Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 1999 provide that the Council must decide each financial year whether it wishes to operate an awards scheme and, if so, whether it will do so generally or only in respect of eligible people who satisfy criteria specified by the Council. The proposal is to put in place policies for a number of targeted awards schemes, as set out in appendices 2, 4 and 5, each specifying the applicable criteria.

7.3 The Local Education Authority (Payment of School Expenses) Regulations 1999 specify that the Council may pay expenses where it is satisfied that such a payment should be made in order to prevent or relieve financial hardship. The proposed school clothing grant policy in Appendix 1 is for the payment of school clothing grants and this contains a relevant eligibility criterion concerning income.

7.4 The Council has a separate discretion under section 508C of the Education Act 1996 to make travel arrangements for children other

than eligible children. The Council may make such arrangements in relation to a child where it considers them necessary to facilitate the child's attendance at any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child. The travel policy in Appendix 3 outlines the Council's approach to the exercise of its discretion.

7.5 The proposed awards policies contain a requirement for residence in Tower Hamlets as part of the eligibility criteria. This will apply equally to UK and other nationals and there is a good argument that it does not give rise to any indirect form of discrimination contrary to Article 49 of the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community.

7.6 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, before making a decision to opt in or out of discretionary awards and before determining the policies on which it will make discretionary payments, the Council must have due regard to: the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010; the need to advance equality of opportunity; and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. Information is provided in section 9 of the report relevant to these considerations. Age is a protected characteristic within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, but the grant of education awards is not considered to be the subject of an anti-discrimination obligation under the Act.

8. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Education is crucial in allowing people to compete successfully in society. The adoption of the power to make discretionary awards will help to ensure equality of opportunity by mitigating financial barriers to education and thereby assisting equality of access to all residents regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and religion/beliefs. This will assist the work of building aspiration among Tower Hamlets students at a time when the lack of economic opportunity means that competition for jobs is ever greater.

8.2 Equalities Analyses were carried out on the Discretionary Awards Schemes shown in this report for the 2012/13 2013/14 academic years and the scheme were found to have an overall positive effect on breaking down barriers to participation and on the protected groups concerned.

9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

9.1 There are no SAGE issues arising from this report.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The discretionary award policies are cash limited wherever possible and an overspend in one can be compensated by an underspend in

another. Reputational risk is guarded against by the annual review of the policies which seeks to ensure that they respond to need.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Cutting crime and anti-social behaviour is about improving quality of life. The discretionary award policies do this by obviating financial need where possible, by allowing young people to fulfil their potential by channelling their energies in a positive way and in some cases by focussing on early intervention.

12. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 12.1 The Directorate is making efficient use of its resources by using an existing team to deliver the Mayor's Further and Higher Education Awards, by concentrating its financial resources on the poorest and most vulnerable members of its community, and by tailoring its scheme to ensure that disadvantaged young people are taken into consideration. The assistance given at further education level will increase students' ability to take part in higher education and that given at higher education level will assist young residents to find employment.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – proposed School Clothing Grant Policy 2014/15
- Appendix 2 – proposed Budget Holding Lead Professional Scheme for AttendanceSupport 2014/15
- Appendix 3 – proposed 16 to 19 Further Education Transport Policy 2014/15
- Appendix 4 – proposed Mayor's Education Award 2014/15
- Appendix 5 – proposed Mayor's Higher Education Award 2014/15

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

- NONE

**School Clothing Grant Policy
2014/15 academic year**

Appendix 1

1 School Clothing Grant

- 1.1 The School Clothing Grant is a single payment of £110 made on one occasion where a pupil transfers from primary to secondary school for pupils from low income families. The grant is made for the academic year in which the pupil reaches the age of 12.
- 1.2 Grants will be made wherever possible in advance of the start of the Autumn term so that parents have access to the money when most needed.

2. Conditions of eligibility

- 2.1 Applicants **must** satisfy the following requirements of the policy to be eligible for a School Clothing Grant:

- age;
- residence;
- school;
- income.

2.1 Age limits

- 2.1.1 Pupils can be considered for a School Clothing Grant for the academic year in which they become 12 years old. Overage and underage pupils may also qualify where their secondary transfer has been approved by the Educational Psychologist and School Development Adviser.
- 2.1.2 The start of the academic year is defined as 1st September.

2.2 Residence requirements

- 2.2.1 The Authority will consider applications from parents and carers living within its area.

2.3 Approved institutions

- 2.3.1 School Clothing Grants will be made to pupils attending courses of secondary education at maintained and private sector secondary schools.

2.4 Benefit requirement

- 2.4.1 To be eligible for a School Clothing Grant the parents or carer must receive:
- income based Job Seekers Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Income related Employment Support Allowance
 - Guaranteed Pension Credit
 - a total income of less than £16,190 (excluding child tax credit and child

benefit, but including any Working Tax Credit you may receive).

- Universal Credit where the applicant is eligible for Free School Meals.

2.4.2 Pupils whose parents or carers are asylum seekers will be eligible to be considered for a School Clothing Grant where their parents or carers receive NASS (National Asylum Support Service) support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

2.4.3 The applicant, their parents or guardians must receive a qualifying benefit at the time of applying.

3. Administration of the payment

3.1 The School Clothing Grant is paid as a single cheque of £110 to the parent or carer of the pupil.

4. Closing dates

4.1 The School Clothing Grant application forms for the 2013/14 academic year must be received by the Housing Benefits Team by **5pm on Monday 30th September 2013.**

5 Exceptional circumstances

5.1 Applications for School Clothing Grants received after the closing date will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances where the pupil and family meet all the criteria of this policy other than having made an application on time.

5.2 Parents applying on exceptional grounds will be asked to provide supporting evidence from a relevant professional, for example an Attendance and Welfare Adviser or Lead Professional.

6 Appeals

6.1 Appeals must be made in writing and will be considered by a panel comprised of at least two senior officers from Attendance and Welfare. Appeals must be accompanied by evidence that the parent or guardian was in receipt of an appropriate benefit as described on paragraph 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 at the time of applying.

Appendix 2

Budget Holding Lead Professional Scheme for Attendance Support (BHSAS)

1 Purpose of the scheme

- 1.1 The aim of this scheme is to assist front line staff in identifying concerns about children and young people at an early stage. It provides access to funding for resources for early intervention to meet the identified needs and thereby avoiding the concerns escalating and becoming entrenched.
- 1.2 Non-attendance and poor punctuality are recognised as being early indicators of difficulties affecting the lives of children and young people. It is also recognised that the Attendance and Welfare Service (AWS) is one of the key front line services working with schools and children and young people of statutory school age and that it has a very important role in working with schools, families and the children and young people to overcome these difficulties.

2 How the BHLPSAS will function

- 2.1 Following receipt of a referral for non-attendance and/or poor punctuality, an AWA and/or school may have conducted or be in the process of conducting an assessment of the factors affecting the education of the pupil using the Tower Hamlets Common Assessment Framework Form (CAF);
- 2.2 This assessment may identify difficulties which could be resolved quickly and effectively through the immediate funding of resources to meet the identified needs;
- 2.3 An application can be submitted to the Principal Attendance and Welfare Advisor briefly detailing the situation and identified needs and the resources required to meet them;
- 2.4 The Principal Attendance and Welfare Advisor as the Budget Manager for the AWS will authorise the funding subject to:
- 2.5
- The request being linked to completion of a CAF on the pupil in question;
- 2.6
- There being evidence of the pupil and his/her carers having participated in the assessment of identified needs;
- 2.7
- Measurable outcomes being specified linked to the provision of the funding for the resources – improved attendance/punctuality;
- 2.8
- Funding for resources will not normally be in cash but in the form of payment of invoices for services/goods received.

3 Eligibility

- 3.1 The pupil's non-attendance or poor punctuality has reached the trigger point for serving a court warning notice;
- 3.2 An assessment utilising the CAF is in process or has been completed. Where the pupil has been the subject of a recent assessment by Children's Social Care then this can be used to avoid duplication but must be accompanied by a completed scored CAF Review Form to detail the current need and to give initial baseline scores;
- 3.3 An urgent need has arisen that requires early provision of resources but will be followed by completion of a CAF such as when parents/carers cannot accompany a child to/from school due to a short term exceptional situation.
- 3.4 This source cannot be used to fund statutory entitlements, the funding can only be used for resources that are additional to statutory entitlements.

4 Funding

- 4.1 For 2014/15 the AWS has a BHSAS allocation of £25,000.

5 The Social Inclusion Panel (SIP)

- 5.1 It is intended that the BHSAS will serve to assist AWAs in meeting pupils' identified needs at an early stage thereby preventing deterioration to the stage of them meeting the criteria at which they must be referred to SIP.
- 5.2 Where a pupil's attendance and/or punctuality does meet the criteria for referral to SIP then they must still be referred even if they are part of the BHLPSAS.
- 5.3 SIP itself also has an allocation from schools' funding under the BHSAS from the Direct Schools' Grant and can offer funding in targeted cases to fund resources to help overcome the difficulties affecting them/meet their needs.

6 Examples of Resources that can be Funded

- 6.1
 - A Reward Scheme
 - An Evening Activity
 - Family Group Conference
 - Teaching Assistant Hours
 - Counselling Support
 - Escort Provision
 - School Uniform
 - Pieces of Equipment – such as a musical instrument
 - After hours One-to-One Support from a Significant Other/Tutor
- 6.2 This list is not exhaustive and AWAs are encouraged to be creative and innovative but any application for resources to be funded must be justified in the

CAF and must be outcome related to the pupil's attendance/punctuality.

7 Applying for Funding through the BHSAS

7.1 Application for funding is through completion and submission of a short form.

7.2 It is required that following the intervention funded by the BHSAS a completed and scored CAF Review Form be submitted to assist in the evaluation of the intervention.

Appendix 3

TOWER HAMLETS FURTHER EDUCATION TRAVEL POLICY 2014/15

1 Amount of support

- 1.1 Eligible applicants will receive a travel pass or a travel grant, whichever is the more cost effective.
- 1.2 The travel grant is a flat rate grant of £300.00 to be paid in three termly instalments. Applications received by the Directorate after the start of the academic year will be funded on a pro-rata basis from the half term in which they are received.
- 1.3 Where an eligible student is taking a specialist vocational course and receiving a Further Education grant, or bursary, but his or her fares are more than £10 per week taking into account fare concessions, they can receive the grant of £300 as detailed in paragraph 1.2.
- 1.4 A specialist vocational course is one that leads to a single national qualification in a specified area, e.g. a national diploma in model making. This does not include a variety of A, A/S or A2 levels, one or more of which cannot be taken locally.
- 1.4 The provision of free bus transport by Transport for London will be taken into account when considering the value of any award made.

2 Responsibility

- 2.1 Applicants must be the ordinarily resident in Tower Hamlets to be the responsibility of Tower Hamlets Children' Services.
 - 2.1.1 'Ordinary residence' refers to a person ordinarily residing in the Borough of Tower Hamlets (apart from temporary or occasional absences) whose residence in the Borough has been adopted voluntarily for settled purposes.
 - 2.1.2 Applicants who are living in Tower Hamlets solely for reasons of taking full-time education are not eligible for support from this policy and should apply to their home authorities for support.

3 Other sources of income

- 3.1 Applicants must first have their entitlement to discretionary bursary support determined, to allow proper consideration of their transport support.
- 3.2 Students should not receive more than one form of travel support. This acknowledges the fact that they may receive EFA funds towards travel costs. The Directorate will not normally fund a student's travel support where he or she has an entitlement to central government funds.

3.3 To be considered for a travel grant, the applicant must be ineligible for any form of government training allowance except in situations where they are taking a specialist course as stated in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.4.

3.4 Exceptionally, students with special educational needs may be considered by the Directorate to need both travel support and other forms of funding.

5 Age

5.1 Applicants can apply for support for the 2014/15 academic year where it follows the academic year in which they became 16, 17 or 18 years old. The academic year is deemed as starting on 1st September 2014.

5.2 Applicants with Special Educational Needs can be funded for the 2014/15 academic year where it follows the academic year in which they became, 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20 years old.

6 Parental Income

6.1 Parental income in the 2014/15 financial year must be no more than £30,810.

6.2 Where the income of an applicant's parents in the 2014/15 financial year can be shown to be 15% less than their income in the 2013/14 financial year, the parents' current estimated income can be used for the purposes of this policy.

7 Recognised schools and colleges

7.1 Travel support can be paid for full-time attendance on any further education course at any public sector school or college or any other school or college that receives funding from the Education Funding Agency. Advice will be sought from the School Development Advisers where applicants wish to go to other educational institutions.

8 Minimum home to school/college distance

8.1 The applicant must be attending a school or college at least one and a half miles radius from the applicant's home.

9 Students with special educational needs

9.1 Applicants with Special Educational Needs can receive a travel grant or travel pass whichever is deemed by the Education Directorate to be most appropriate. These applications will be considered taking into account the other criteria of this policy.

9.2 Where students with Special Educational Needs are concerned, consideration may be given to reducing the minimum home to school/college distance, taking into account the individual circumstances of the student relevant to the distance involved.

9.3 Students without a statement of Special Educational Needs but who have special needs can be considered exceptionally for a travel pass or travel grant under the same conditions that apply to students with Special Educational Needs.

10 **Appeals procedure**

10.1 Any applicant refused support can appeal in writing to the Awards Review Officer for further consideration. The appeal letter must be received by the Student Finance Section within 21 days of the date on which the refusal letter was sent.

10.2 The Awards Review Officer will determine whether or not the decision to refuse support has been properly made within the confines of the 16-19 Further Education Travel Policy.

11 **Exceptional circumstances**

11.1 Where an application has been properly refused but is felt to merit exceptional consideration by the Awards Review Officer, support can be offered on the agreement of the Head of the Access and Inclusion Service. The decision of this officer will be final.

12 **Cash limitations**

12.1 The budget to support the 16-19 Further Education Travel Policy is cash limited. Tower Hamlets Children, Schools and Families Directorate therefore reserves the right to refuse any application made under this policy on the grounds that sufficient funds are not available.

Appendix 4

1. THE TOWER HAMLETS MAYOR'S EDUCATION AWARD POLICY 20014/2015

- 1.1 The Children Schools and Learning Directorate will consider making Mayor's Education Awards under the Discretionary Awards Policy to students who are its responsibility.
- 1.2 Any award made will be for the student's maintenance only. Awards will not be made for course fees.
- 1.3 Any award offered will be for a specific course at an education provider recognised for the Discretionary Awards Policy and will be for a specific period. It will not be transferable to any other course or provider without the specific consent of the Directorate.
- 1.4 Further education students must make a written application on the form provided to allow their case to be considered. No student will have an automatic entitlement to a Mayor's Education Award.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Definitions used will follow those appearing in the EFA Funding Guidance Regulations 2031/14.

3. 16-19 FE Awards - conditions of eligibility

- 3.1 Applicants must satisfy the following criteria of the policy to be eligible for a 16-19 FE Award:
 - age;
 - residence;
 - course;
 - recognised college.

3.1 Responsibility for applications

- 3.1.1 To be eligible for consideration for a 16-19 FE Award, an applicant must be the responsibility of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in accordance with the Areas to which Pupils Belong Regulations 1996.

3.2 Age limits

- 3.2.1 16-19 FE Awards are considered for applicants aged 16 to 18 years old before the start of the academic year in which the course starts. Students becoming 19 within an academic year will be funded to the end of that academic year.
- 3.2.2 Awards will only be considered for courses that would normally be completed by the end of the academic year in which the student becomes 19.

- 3.2.3 Exceptionally students who had an SEN statement and/or those who are recognised by the Directorate's panel of experts as disabled may be funded up to the academic year in which they become 21 years old.

3.3 Residence requirements

- 3.3.1 Applicants must have been ordinarily resident in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for 3 years preceding the start of the course which is defined as:-
- 1st September for courses commencing in the Autumn term
 - 1st January for courses commencing in the Spring term
 - 1st April for courses commencing in the Summer term.
- 3.3.2 Applicants who have been resident in Tower Hamlets wholly or mainly to undertake a full-time course of education during any part of the 3 years preceding the start of the course will not be accepted as meeting the Tower Hamlets residence requirement.
- 3.3.3 The following are exempted from the Tower Hamlets 3 years residence requirement:-
- applicants who live in the borough and hold full refugee status,
 - applicants returning to the borough who have been in care or looked after by Tower Hamlets Council
 - applicants who have been away during this period and whose parents have maintained a home in the borough throughout the 3 years (e.g. students, returnees from extended visits abroad)
- 3.3.4 Applicants must be 'settled' in the EU/EEA (including the UK) and have been ordinarily resident in the EU/EEA for the three years preceding the start of the academic year as defined in para 3.4.1 above and whose main purpose for such residence was not to receive full-time education during any part of the three-year period.
- 3.3.5 'Settled' means having either indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/R) or having the right of abode in the UK.
- 3.3.6 Applicants who meet the EU/EEA rules of the EFA Funding Guidance Regulations 2013 will be accepted as meeting the EU/EEA rule of this policy.
- 3.3.7 An exception will be made for those YPLA groups only eligible up to the age of 18. Their age of eligibility is extended to 19 or 21 where SEN and/or disability rules apply (see para 3.2.3 above).

3.4 Approved courses

- 3.4.1 Awards will be considered for courses of FE leading to nationally recognised qualifications offered by regulated awarding bodies.
- 3.4.2 Mayor's Education Awards are normally only offered to students on a programme containing at least 450 guided learning hours in any 12-month period i.e. any academic year.

3.5 Recognised colleges

- 3.5.1 The Authority recognises all further education public sector provision in the UK.
- 3.5.2 Awards will be considered for private sector further education provision where students are predominately enrolled in learning which leads to an external certificate offered by a regulated awarding organisation and where the provider is subject to inspection by OFSTED or a similar organisation with a remit set by central government.
- 3.5.3 Furthermore, private training providers will be recognised where they are providing courses to disadvantaged young person referred to them the City Gateway charity.

3.6 Household income

- 3.6.1 Awards will only be considered for students with a household income of up to £20,817 in the 2014/15 tax year.
- 3.6.2 Household income is defined as the total amount a family receives each year before tax and National Insurance. Taxable income from all sources, taxable benefits and Working Tax Credit will be taken into account.
- 3.6.3 Non-taxable benefits such as Income Support and Child Benefit will be disregarded.
- 3.6.4 The income taken into account is that of the student and parents. The term 'parents' includes stepparents and a parent's partner.
- 3.6.5 The income of absent parents will not be taken into consideration where it can be demonstrated that the absent parent is no longer part of the household, such as in cases of divorce.

4 Deadline for the receipt of forms

- 4.1 An application must be received within three months from the date of enrolment and must be made before the end of the course year.
- 4.2 Applications will not be considered for retrospective academic years.

5 Value of the award

- 5.1 The Mayor's Education Award will be £400 p.a. per individual to be delivered in two instalments, one in the Spring Term and one in the Summer Term, both instalments consisting of £200.
- 5.2 In situations where a student enrolls on a course after the mid-point of the academic year the award will be limited to a single instalment of £200.

- 5.3 The Award will normally be a cash award, paid to the student, but with the agreement of the student and the education provider concerned, may be paid to a third part to purchase a defined educational benefit such as a school trip.

6 The need for attendance, effort and good behaviour

- 6.1 Awards will only be released to students with the agreement of the education provider. Providers will be able to suspend the payment of an award instalment or cancel it where the student does not meet accepted levels of attendance, effort or behaviour.
- 6.2 Providers must have an internal appeals process to allow students to contest the suspension or cancellation of an award.

7 Exceptional cases

- 7.1 Applications that are ineligible for a Mayor's Education Award will be considered to see whether they merit support exceptionally. In these cases the following factors will be taken into account:
- 7.2
- medical and social factors;
 - family circumstances;
 - qualifications gained;
 - funding available from other sources, both public and private;
 - commitment to the chosen career;
 - any other information put forward.

8 Appeals

- 8.1 Applicants refused support can make a written appeal. Appeals must be received by the Section administering the scheme within 21 days of the date on the letter refusing support, or they will be ruled as out of time.
- 8.2 Appeals will be decided by an Appeals Panel chaired by the Head of Secondary Learning and Achievement. Decisions to make awards exceptionally will be made by the Service Head – Learning and Achievement who will consider cases passed up by the Chair of the Appeals Panel.

9 Verification of information

- 9.1 Documentary evidence may be sought as necessary to prove any aspect of the information supplied on an application form for a Mayor's Education Award.

10 Cash Limits

- 10.1 The budget for 16-19 FE awards is cash limited. Therefore, the Directorate reserves the right to refuse any application made under this policy on the grounds that sufficient funds are not available.**

Appendix 5

1. THE TOWER HAMLETS MAYOR'S HIGHER EDUCATION AWARD POLICY 2014/2015

- 1.1 The Mayor's Higher Education Award scheme will make awards in the **2014/15** academic year only, with the awards lasting into the **2015/16** academic year.
- 1.2 The Education, Social Work and Wellbeing Directorate will consider making Mayor's Higher Education Award under the Discretionary Awards Policy to students who are its responsibility.
- 1.3 Any award made will be for the student's maintenance only. Awards will not be made for course fees.
- 1.4 Any award offered will be for a specific course at an education provider recognised for the Discretionary Awards Policy and will be for a specific period. It will not be transferable to any other course or provider without the specific consent of the Directorate.
- 1.5 Higher education students must make a written application on the form provided to allow their case to be considered. No student will have an automatic entitlement to a Mayor's Higher Education Award.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Definitions used will follow those appearing in the Education (Student Support Regulations) 2011/12 allowing for any changes arising from The Education (Student Fees, Awards and Support) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

3. Mayor's Higher Education Award - conditions of eligibility

- 3.1 Applicants must satisfy the following criteria of the policy to be eligible for an MHEA:
 - age;
 - residence;
 - course;
 - receipt of statutory student finance.

3.1 Responsibility for applications

- 3.1.1 To be eligible for consideration for a Mayor's Higher Education Award, an applicant must be the responsibility of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as defined by the Areas to which Pupils Belong Regulations 1996.

3.2 Age limits

- 3.2.1 Mayor's Higher Education Awards are considered for applicants aged up to

24 years old before the start of the academic year in which the course commences.

An exception is made for any student who has or has had a Special Educational Needs statement up to the age of 16, or who receives Disability Living Allowance. These students can apply up to the age of 25 years old before the start of the academic year in which the course commences

Having regard to their circumstances, students becoming 24 or 25 within an academic year will be funded for the duration of any award offered.

3.5 Residence requirements

3.5.1 Applicants must have been ordinarily resident in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for 3 years preceding the start of the course which is defined as the:-

- 1st September
- 1st January
- 1st April
- 1st July

preceding the start of the course.

3.5.2 Applicants who have been resident in Tower Hamlets wholly or mainly to undertake a full-time course of education during any part of the three years preceding the start of the course will not be accepted as meeting the Tower Hamlets residence requirement.

3.5.3 The following are exempted from the Tower Hamlets three years residence requirement:-

- applicants who live in the Borough and hold full refugee status,
- applicants living in the Borough who had previously lived outside Tower Hamlets through being in the public care of Tower Hamlets Council,
- applicants who have been away during this period and whose parents have maintained a home in the Borough throughout the three years (e.g. students, returnees from extended visits abroad).

3.5.4 Despite living outside the Borough of Tower Hamlets, a young person can apply for a Mayor's Higher Education Award for a first designated course where they commence the course by the age of 21 where Tower Hamlets Council, through Leaving Care remains the corporate parent to the young person, who is designated as a 'former relevant child'.

3.6 Approved courses

3.6.1 Awards will be considered for a first full-time undergraduate course of higher education designated under the Education Student Finance Regulations as attracting student finance.

3.6.3 Exceptionally, an award will be considered for a first designated part-time course where a student cannot study a designated full-time course because

of the effects of a disability.

- 3.6.4 A first undergraduate course will include any designated two year undergraduate course such as an HND or Foundation Degree, any degree course and any other undergraduate course designated under the Education Student Finance Regulations.
- 3.6.5 Post Graduate Course of Education are excluded from consideration.
- 3.6.6 A student will be eligible for consideration where:
- 3.6.7
- having taken the first year of a designated course, they have abandoned the first course and are starting a new designated course in the first year for which they will receive a fee loan from Student Finance England, or
- 3.6.8
- having taken a two year course such as a Foundation Degree, they have gained entry to a degree course for which they will receive a fee loan from Student Finance England.

3.7 Receipt of support from the Education (Student Support) Regulations

- 3.7.1 To be eligible to be considered for a Mayor's Higher Education Award, an applicant must be found by Student Finance England to be eligible to the following support under the Student Finance Regulations:
- a fees loan and
 - a full maintenance grant or special support grant that has not been reduced by means testing.
- 3.7.2 In the event that a young person who is designated as a 'former relevant child' of Tower Hamlets Council has to apply for student finance in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, they will be required to receive the full fees support and full maintenance grant applicable to the part of the British Islands in which they live. Applications for an Mayor's Higher Education Awards of this nature will be considered individually.

4 Deadline for the receipt of forms

- 4.1 An application must be received by 5pm on Tuesday 30th September 2014 for a course starting at any point in the period 1st September 2014 to 31st August 2015.

Late applications will only be considered where fewer than 400 eligible applications have been received. Where a late application is allowed it will be placed at the end of the group of students to be considered

- 4.2 Applications will not be considered for retrospective academic years.

5 Number and value of the award

- 5.1 400 Mayor's Higher Education Awards will be made.

- 5.2 The Mayor's Higher Education Award will be £1,500 per individual taking a full-time course to be delivered in two instalments of £750, one in the second term of the first year of the course and the other in the second term of the second year of the course.
- 5.3 Where the designated course supported is only one year long the award will consist of a single payment of £750.
- 5.4 Where an award is made for a part-time course, the award will consist of £750 paid in two instalments of £375 one in the second term of the first year of the course and the other in the second term of the second year of the course.

6 Consideration of applications

- 6.1 Where there are more applications received than awards available, applications will be ranked in the following order of precedent.
- i Young people who were in public care where Tower Hamlets Council is the corporate parent through its responsibility to a 'former relevant child'.
 - ii Young people having had a statement of Special Educational Needs up to the ages of 16 and leaving school, or 19 and leaving sixth form..
 - iii Single parents who have a child living with them.
 - iv Teenage parents who have a child living with them.
 - v Disable young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.
 - vi Young people living alone and in receipt of income support in their own right.
 - vii Young people living with their partner or in a family where the sole income is from benefits, ranked in descending age order, i.e. with preference given to the youngest.
 - viii Young people living with their partner or in a family where the income is partly made up of benefits (other than universal benefits such as Child Benefit or Child Tax Credit), ranked in descending age order, i.e. with preference given to the youngest.
 - ix Family income includes that of the applicant's partner, their parents, their parents' partners or their carers in the event that they do not live with their parents or partner.
 - x In the event that a tie-breaker must be implemented, consideration will be given to all the circumstances of the families involved.
 - xi Where the ranked list of eligible students is more than 400 long, awards will be offered to the first 400 and where those awards cannot be taken up, will be offered to the next applicant on the list until the number of awards is exhausted.
 - xii Any late applications allowed will be set in chronological order and will be the last priority.

7 Withdrawal from a course

- 7.1 An offer of an award will be cancelled where the applicant withdraws from a course before the payment of the award has been made or where the applicant is obliged by the authorities of the higher education institution concerned to leave the course for any reason.

8 Transferring or starting a new course before the end of the award

- 8.1 The second instalment of the award will be made where the student has transferred to, or started a new course of an equivalent or higher level than the course for which the award was originally given, e.g. HND to degree or degree to degree.

9 Repayment of overpayments

- 9.1 Where a student receives funds from the Mayor's Higher Education Award and is overpaid for any reason, the LA will seek reimbursement of the overpayment.

10 Appeals

- 10.1 Applicants refused support can make a written appeal. Appeals must be received by the Section administering the scheme within 21 days of the date on the letter refusing support, or they will be ruled as out of time.
- 10.2 Applicants that are ineligible for a Mayor's Education Award and appeal against that decision will be considered to see whether they merit support exceptionally. In these cases the following factors will be taken into account
- medical and social factors;
 - family circumstances;
 - qualifications gained;
 - funding available from other sources, both public and private;
 - commitment to a chosen career;
 - any other information put forward.
- 10.3 Appeals will be decided by an Appeals Panel chaired by the Head of Secondary Learning and Achievement. The Appeals Panel will make any recommendation to allow an appeal to the Lead Member who will make a final decision on the case.

11 Verification of information

- 11.1 Documentary evidence will be sought as necessary to prove any aspect of the information supplied on an application form for a Mayor's Higher Education Award. This will include a document from confirming the applicant's entitlement to a fee loan and full living cost grant

12 Cash Limits

- 12.1 The budget for 16-19 FE awards is cash limited. Therefore, the Directorate reserves the right to refuse any application made under this policy on the grounds that sufficient funds are not available.**