



# **Strategic Plan 2015/16**

## **Introduction: the 2015/16 context**

This outline Strategic Plan describes the council's overall aims, objectives and the outcomes we want to deliver. The Strategic Plan action plan details the milestones planned in 2015/16 to achieve those outcomes.

The Strategic Plan is informed by the Mayor's key priorities including:

- Housing and Regeneration;
- Jobs and Local Economy;
- Cost of Living;
- Young People and Schools;
- Older People and Health;
- Community Safety and Community Cohesion;
- Environment and Public Realm; and
- Arts, Heritage, Leisure and Culture.

The Strategic Plan 2015/16 takes into account the continued impact of the government's reductions in funding to local authorities. A key area of focus in 2015/16 will be the continued work to design and deliver savings that will be required in future years. The council continues to prioritise front-line services.

### **National Context**

The Coalition Government is continuing to implement significant changes to the services which our local residents rely on. This includes:

- Significant reform of welfare – a key focus for the government in 2015/16 will be implementation of Universal Credit.
- New expectations and requirements, for example in relation to supporting carers and children with special educational needs.
- A reduction in local authority remit in key areas, such as education, with the continuing encouragement of free schools and academies.

### **Council Finances**

The prolonged real term reduction in public spending faced by local authorities has been a continuing challenge for the council. The 2013 Spending Review and subsequent statements from the Office for Budget Responsibility have seen extensive and ongoing reductions in central government funding - both revenue and capital. The council has already made good progress in achieving savings, however further cuts now mean that there is a budget reduction of between £70m and £100 million to achieve in the next three years. The protection of the quality of front line services is a fundamental principle for the Mayor and council.

The council will continue to explore innovative ways in which it can deliver quality services with fewer resources. So far, we have achieved savings through activities such as through greater partnership working, shared services and working more closely with the third sector, as well as investigating revenue raising opportunities.

## **Population growth and change**

The estimated resident population of Tower Hamlets is 272,000. Over recent years, the borough has seen the highest population growth in the country.

Tower Hamlets remains a relatively young borough, with almost half of the recent population rise concentrated in the 25-34 age range. The profile of the borough is one of increasing diversity, with 43% of the population born outside of the UK. There are sizeable Bangladeshi (32%) and White British communities (31%) and an increasing number of smaller ethnic groups in the resident population.

## **Employment and the economy**

Tower Hamlets is one of the highest economic and employment growth areas in the country. There are already over 253,000 jobs in the borough: equating to 1.3 jobs for every working age resident. The economy has important financial, communication and retail sectors with 81% of all employment in the borough based in Canary Wharf and the City Fringe.

Supporting residents to benefit from the borough's strong economy is still a key challenge. Only 15% of jobs within the borough are taken by local people. Although the borough's employment rate was recently recorded at its highest ever level, it remains below the London average. Effective employment services, to support more local residents to gain the skills required and to access London wide opportunities, will be central to maintaining the upward trend in local employment.

Work with local business, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to create growth remains an important priority. This will be supported by a range of measures including business engagement events, town centre development, marketing campaigns and local procurement initiatives.

## **Education**

Outcomes for local children and young people continue to improve. Local Key Stage 2 and GCSE results are now consistently above national averages. The Mayor's Education Award has helped more young people continue in further and higher education, and A-Level grades are getting better year-on-year. The Children and Families Act is now in force, which includes a focus on support to children with special educational needs.

## **Housing and Environment**

A fast growing population, low income levels for many households and high house prices makes housing a key challenge for the borough. The borough has a strong track record of building large numbers of affordable homes for residents – amongst the best in the country.

Despite this, housing need and demand continue to increase. For example, there are around 20,250 households on the housing waiting list with over 7,500 of these overcrowded. On average around 2,200 properties become available each year.

In addition, the Government's welfare reform changes are really taking effect. Many households have had their income reduced and there has been a rise in residents seeking advice: both to understand how the changes will affect them, and to get support in mitigating the impact of the reforms.

The development industry is continuing to submit proposals to redevelop in the borough. The Tower Hamlets Local Plan sets out the extensive physical renewal that is planned to meet the needs of the growing population. From 2015, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will detail how the supporting infrastructure required will be paid for including funding from development. The borough is set to change significantly with innovative developments planned supporting better transport links, an improved public realm and new community facilities.

### **Health and Care**

Despite strong progress in recent years, improving healthy life outcomes for residents remains a key priority in the Strategic Plan. Eight out of ten residents report that their health is good or very good; however, the proportion citing poor health is the fourth highest in London.

Health inequalities begin early and Tower Hamlets has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the country. The integration of public health functions into the council has provided a strong platform for further health improvements across all ages.

Social care is a strong local and national priority. In recent years, Tower Hamlets has focused on safeguarding and transforming social care services by giving users more choice and control. Nationally, the Care Act sets out a number of significant changes the council will need to focus upon including reform of how support is accessed and funded. Work to support the further integration of health and care locally will be taken forward by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

### **Inequality and fairness**

Underpinning the objectives of the Strategic Plan is the theme of One Tower Hamlets – reducing inequality, fostering community cohesion and supporting strong local leadership.

The effects of the economic downturn, coupled with the loss of funding for many public services, means that the council is operating in an environment in which there are risks that inequality will grow rather than reduce in the borough.

There has been significant progress in delivering the actions identified by the borough's Fairness Commission, including in addressing the 'poverty premium' in Tower Hamlets. The learning and research developed through the Commission will have also informed the development of the borough's Community Plan.

### **Single Equality Framework**

The Strategic Plan incorporates the council's Single Equality Framework (SEF) priorities. The SEF sets out the council framework for tackling inequality and promoting cohesion and incorporates an analysis of inequality in the borough. Provisional SEF Equality Objectives are highlighted with a \* in the Outline Plan; these will be reviewed and further developed with accompanying milestones as part of the development of the Strategic Plan Action Plan.

To ensure that we are able to track performance against our equality objectives for 2015/16 we have identified a set of equality performance measures. These include existing performance measures that relate to equality and measures which will be disaggregated by specific equality strands where we need to narrow the gap in terms

of outcomes for specific groups. This approach demonstrates that we are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty to prepare and publish objectives which demonstrate how the organisation will meet the aims of the Duty. The SEF measures are highlighted with an \*.

### **Best Value Inspection**

During 2014/15, a Best Value Inspection of the Council was undertaken at the request of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. A key focus in 2015/16 will be responding to the inspection's findings, including agreeing a strategy and action plan with the Secretary of State's appointed commissioners

## **From vision to performance**

The Mayor and our partners have a clear vision for the borough *to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets*. It is a vision that has been agreed by partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

As part of this vision the Mayor developed a set of pledges which are articulated through the **Five Themes** of the Community Plan:

**A Great Place to Live** - Tower Hamlets will be a place where people live in quality affordable housing, located in clean and safe neighbourhoods served by well-connected and easy to access services and community facilities.

**A Prosperous Community** - Tower Hamlets will be a place where everyone, regardless of their background and circumstances, has the aspiration and opportunity to achieve their full potential through education and vibrant local enterprise.

**A Safe and Cohesive Community** - Tower Hamlets will be a safer place where people feel safer, get on better together and difference is not seen as threat but a core strength of the borough.

**A Healthy and Supportive Community** - Tower Hamlets will be a place where people are supported to live healthier, more independent lives and the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults is reduced.

**One Tower Hamlets** – Tower Hamlets will be a place where everyone feels they have an equal stake and status. We are committed to reducing inequalities, supporting cohesion and providing strong community leadership.

## **Strategic Priorities**

Sitting underneath the Strategic Plan's five themes are the council's strategic priorities. These priorities set out more explicitly the organisation's key objectives for the next year.

### **A Great Place to Live**

- 1.1: Provide good quality affordable housing
- 1.2: Maintain and improve the quality of housing
- 1.3: Improve the local environment and public realm
- 1.4: Provide effective local services and facilities
- 1.5: Improve local transport links and connectivity
- 1.6: Develop stronger communities

### **A Prosperous Community**

- 2.1: Improve educational aspiration and attainment
- 2.2: Support more people into work
- 2.3: Manage the impact of welfare reform on local residents
- 2.4: Foster enterprise and entrepreneurship

### **A Safe and Cohesive Community**

- 3.1: Focus on crime and anti-social behaviour
- 3.2: Reduce fear of crime
- 3.3: Foster greater community cohesion

### **A Healthy and Supportive Community**

- 4.1: Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles
- 4.2: Enable people to live independently
- 4.3: Provide excellent primary and community care
- 4.4: Keep vulnerable children, adults and families' safer, minimising harm and neglect

### **One Tower Hamlets**

- 5.1: Reduce inequalities
- 5.2: Work efficiently and effectively as One Council

## **Key Activities and Initiatives**

The next section of this outline plan sets out the key activities and initiatives we propose to carry out in 2015/16 to enable us to deliver our vision and strategic priorities. The Strategic Plan Action Plan will set out further detail on these activities, including the more specific milestones planned in 2015/16.

## **A Great Place to Live**

A Great Place to Live reflects the Council's continuing ambition to make Tower Hamlets a place where people are proud to live, work and visit.

In 2015/16 we will endeavour to maximise the number of new affordable homes delivered, increase the number of existing homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard and tackle fuel poverty. We will also continue to focus on securing transparent service charges for leaseholders and ensuring that Registered Providers deliver on their service agreements.

The council will maintain its leading role on significant regeneration developments, including at Blackwall Reach and in Whitechapel. Improving our public realm will remain a key focus. The council will also take further steps to enhance its library and lifelong learning service, as well as our leisure facilities.

A key priority is to respond effectively to continuing housing and welfare reform, including homelessness prevention, as we seek to mitigate the impact on our residents.

### **In 2015/16 our priorities are to:**

#### *Provide good quality affordable housing:*

- Increase the availability of affordable family sized housing\*
- Plan effectively to deliver affordable housing and funding for infrastructure, including for health and education
- Deliver a programme of new build Council housing
- Support regeneration at Blackwall Reach and the Ocean Estate
- Increase the pace of regeneration in Poplar
- Deliver housing, a leisure centre and community facilities at Poplar Baths / Dame Colet house
- Seek to mitigate homelessness and improve housing options\*

#### *Maintain and improve the quality of housing:*

- Reduce the number of council homes that fall below a decent standard\*
- Improve the quality of housing services
- Identify and target sub-standard homes and work with landlords, or enforce where required, to improve conditions
- Offer affordable fuel options through the Tower Hamlets Energy Community Power (Energy Cooperative)\*

#### *Improve the local environment and public realm:*

- Progress the Carbon Reduction Plan for council buildings
- Protect and improve the local environment and implement the biodiversity action plan.
- Work in partnership to improve our public realm
- Increase household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- Improve our parks, playgrounds and open spaces

*Provide effective local services and facilities:*

- Manage national planning changes effectively to deliver local priorities
- Further improve our markets
- Adopt the Tower Hamlets local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Deliver the Whitechapel Vision
- Refresh of the Borough Local Plan
- Commence the Isle of Dogs Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF)
- Deliver a multi-faith burial ground\*

*Improve local transport links and connectivity:*

- Support sustainable local transport including cycle improvements

*Develop stronger communities:*

- Engage residents and community leaders in policy and budget changes\*
- Implement a framework for engagement of borough-wide equality forums in the Partnership\*
- Deliver locally appropriate services through the 4 Locality Hubs



## A Prosperous Community

We aim to create a Tower Hamlets in which everyone, regardless of their background and circumstances, has the aspiration and opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Tower Hamlets aims to maintain its excellent performance in school improvement, supported by a strong local education authority and active parents and governors. The council will continue to invest in supporting young people across all ages and embed the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Fostering enterprise and employment is a key priority for the council. It is important that we continue to drive local economic growth by working effectively with business, including small and medium enterprises. Supporting more local people into jobs through effective employment services is also essential.

As the Government seeks to introduce its Universal Credit system, the council will maintain its support to residents through national welfare reform. An extensive programme of information and awareness raising, supported by employability and other assistance for residents, will remain important throughout 2015/16.

### **In 2015/16 our priorities are to:**

#### *Improve educational aspiration and attainment:*

- Ensure sufficient places are provided to meet the need for statutory school places
- Expand free early years education places of high quality for disadvantaged two-year-olds\*
- Raise attainment and narrow the gap between the lowest 20% and the median of all children at the end of the Early Year's Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)\*
- Increase the number of children achieving 5 A\*-C grades including English and maths grades at GCSE\*
- Bring A Level results above the national average\*
- Embed a Child Rights Approach in all of our commissioning for 2015-16\*
- Assist more people into further education and to university, and continue to deliver the Mayor's Educational Allowance (MEA) and the Mayor's Higher Education Award (MEHEA)\*
- Maintain investment in youth services and provision for young people\*
- Provide effective support for parents and governors\*
- Embed the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2013 to support children with special educational needs\*

#### *Support more people into work:*

- Support residents into jobs through employment and skills programmes\*
- Provide high quality support and training to assist young people into sustainable employment\*
- Develop and implement a Women and Health employment programme focusing on the priority of Maternity and Early Years\*
- Maximise local employment and economic benefits from the council's processes\*
- Support English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)\*

*Manage the impact of welfare reform on local residents and maximising incomes:*

- Drive the ongoing partnership wide programme around welfare reform\*
- Ensure integrated local support for the roll out of Universal Credit\*
- Implement the Digital Inclusion Strategy\*

*Fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship:*

- Support local businesses through information sharing and events
- Develop opportunities for growth and sustainability in local commercial districts

## Safe and Cohesive Community

Ensuring that everyone feels safe and confident in their homes and on the streets of Tower Hamlets remains a key Mayoral priority. There will be a continued focus on crime and anti-social behaviour, with effective and visible enforcement.

The council will continue to invest in Police Officers and uniformed THEOs. We also recognise the need to go beyond simply tackling crime and ASB to also address people's fear of crime and perceptions of personal safety through better information, community engagement and an improved local environment.

Tower Hamlets is rightly proud of its diversity. The council remains committed to bringing all of its communities together to foster understanding, support cohesion and build 'One Tower Hamlets'. Supporting events which celebrate the diversity of the borough and its people plays an important role in this respect.

### **In 2015/16 our priorities are to:**

#### *Focus on crime and anti-social behaviour:*

- Deliver the partnership 'Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) programme'
- Manage the night time economy
- With our partners, deliver the Partnership Community Safety Plan\*
- Work with the Police and Mayor for London to maintain and improve enforcement
- Use CCTV and the mobile police centre, and engage the Community Champions and local people, to help identify and target the crime and ASB affecting our community

#### *Reduce fear of crime by:*

- Improve the responsiveness and visibility of our ASB services\*

#### *Foster greater community cohesion:*

- Celebrate our diversity with community events every month\*

## **A Healthy and Supportive Community**

Our aim is to support residents to live healthier, more independent lives and reduce the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults.

Within this theme, a key emphasis is on promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring fewer residents require long-term care for avoidable health needs. The council is also committed to protecting the interests of residents in the context of significant health reforms. The successful transfer of public health responsibilities to the council has provided a solid foundation on which to build.

The council is committed to ensuring that Tower Hamlets is one of the top performing councils in the country with responsibility for social services. A key priority will be implementing the Care Act and using this to help improve our services. Supporting our most vulnerable residents is important to us; Tower Hamlets continues to be the only borough in England that still provides free homecare for example.

### **In 2015/16 our priorities are to:**

- Ensure every child has a healthy start\*
- Support people to lead healthier lives\*
- Improve the support available to people with mental health conditions\*
- Improve early detection and awareness of long-term conditions and cancer\*
- Use Public Health expertise within a Council and Partnership-wide approach to reduce health inequalities for all sections of the community\*
- Invest in the borough's leisure centres and playing pitches
- Deliver free school meals for all primary pupils in the borough\*
- Work with people with drug and alcohol dependencies, commissioning effective treatment provision, to break the cycle of substance misuse\*

#### *Enable people to live independently:*

- Improve support to carers\*
- Enable personalised support for the borough's most vulnerable residents\*

#### *Provide excellent primary and community care:*

- Develop further integrated working between health, social care and housing\*
- Implement the Care Act\*

#### *Keep vulnerable children, adults and families' safer, minimising harm and neglect:*

- Work with partner agencies to protect vulnerable adults\*
- Provide proportionate support to vulnerable children and families\*
- Introduce improvements to the adoption system\*
- Improve identification of, and response to, victims of child sexual exploitation\*

## One Tower Hamlets

Underpinning the Community Plan vision is the aspiration to build One Tower Hamlets – a borough where everyone feels they have an equal stake and status. We are committed to reducing inequalities, fostering cohesion and supporting strong community leadership.

The over-arching aim of One Tower Hamlets takes on added importance in the context of considerable budget reductions. As part of this, we will continue our work with partners to help address the recommendations arising from the Fairness Commission.

This theme also reflects the key projects we are delivering to make our council more lean, flexible and citizen-centred. Over the next year, we intend to better use our assets, work smarter and buy better.

A key focus will be responding to the findings of the Best Value inspection of the Council that was undertaken in 2014/15, including facilitating any confirmed directions from the Secretary of State.

### **In 2015/16 our priorities are to:**

#### *Reduce inequalities:*

- Employ a workforce that fully reflects the community it serves\*
- Support more employment opportunities for disabled residents, including Council apprenticeships\*
- Continue to deliver the recommendations arising from the Tower Hamlets Fairness Commission\*
- Refresh our strategies around diversity and cohesion\*
- Ensure that 'every voice matters'\*

#### *Work efficiently and effectively as One Council:*

- Respond to the Best Value inspection's findings, including agreeing a strategy and action plan with the appointed commissioners
- Create an environment that fosters a healthy and effective workforce
- Develop the strategic ICT partnership
- Maximise potential income from our rate base and our council tax base
- Develop Progressive Partnerships to further the Mayor's social objectives\*
- Improve customer satisfaction with residents when they contact the Council
- Make better use of our buildings and other public assets
- Tackle misuse of public assets and generate income from pro-active anti-fraud work
- Prioritise frontline services whilst delivering the council's budget strategy during a period of declining resources\*

# Measuring our Performance

We use a basket of performance measures to track whether we are delivering on our strategic priorities. The proposed measures are set out below.

## A Great Place to Live

- Number of affordable homes delivered
- Number of affordable social rented housing completions for families (gross)\*
- Level of homeless prevention through casework\*
- Number of overcrowded families rehoused\*
- Percentage of overall housing stock that is not decent\*
- Satisfaction with parks and open spaces
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling & composting
- Improved street & environmental cleanliness
- Satisfaction with local neighbourhood

## A Prosperous Community

- Early Years Achievement - Percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development\*
- Percentage of children achieving Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2\*
- Achievement of 5 or more A\*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths\*
- Average Point Score per A Level Student (FTE)\*
- Percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)\*
- Employment rate (gap v London)\*
- Jobseekers Allowance Claimant Count (gap v London)\*
- Number of job starts for Tower Hamlets residents\*
- Child Poverty rate

## A Safe and Cohesive Community

*(MPOAC 7 and Community Safety Partnership priority measures – to be confirmed through the CSP planning process)*

- MOPAC 7 crimes (total)
- Burglary Offences
- Robbery Offences
- Theft of a Motor Vehicle Offences
- Theft from a Motor Vehicle offences
- Theft from the Person Offences
- Total number of criminal damage
- Total number of Violence with Injury Offences (Total, DV only\* and Exc. DV)
- Number of Police ASB CAD (101 & 999) Calls
- Number of Total Notifiable Offences
- Local concern about ASB and Crime
- Number of people killed or seriously injured
- Number of children killed or seriously injured
- Satisfaction with the Police and Community Safety Partnership\*
- Proportion of residents who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area\*

## **A Healthy and Supportive Community**

- Life expectancy at birth (male/female)\*
- Smoking prevalence (overall)
- Smoking cessation\*
- Under 18 conception
- Excess weight in 4-5 year olds\*
- Percentage of CAF reviews with an improved score
- Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support, and those receiving direct payments\*
- Social care-related quality of life\*
- Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family
- Percentage of ethnic minority background children adopted\*

## **One Tower Hamlets**

- Proportion of staff that are LP07 or above who have a disability\*
- Proportion of staff that are LP07 or above who are from an ethnic minority\*
- Proportion of staff that are LP07 or above that are women\*
- Working days lost due to sickness absence
- Customer access satisfaction
- Proportion of residents that agree the council involves residents when making decisions
- Proportion of residents that agree the council is doing a good job
- Percentage of council tax collected (budgeted)
- Percentage of non-domestic rates collected (budgeted)

\*Denotes SEF equality objectives / performance measures