

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date: 10 th June 2008	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:	Agenda Item:
Report of: Acting Chief Executive		Title: Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement		
Originating officer(s) Alan Steward, Interim Service Head, Strategy and Performance Kevin Kewin, Strategy Policy Manager		Wards Affected: All		

Special Circumstances and Reasons for Urgency

- The report was unavailable for public inspection within the standard timescales set out in the Authority's Constitution, because of the continuation of negotiations with Government Office for London over the indicators and targets to be included within the Council's Local Area Agreement which it had been anticipated would be completed in time for publication of the agenda for this meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The Local Area Agreement is the recognised delivery vehicle for the Community Plan and the principal target setting mechanism between central and local government. It was vital that the Community Plan and Local Area Agreement were consistent and aligned to allow proper consideration of the report by Members.

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents – through its appendices – the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-11.
- 1.2 This falls under the Council's Budget and Policy Framework and the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be tabled at the Cabinet meeting on 11th June 2008 for Members' consideration.
- 1.3 Cabinet is required by the Council's Constitution to take account of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before submitting recommendations to Full Council on 21 June 2008.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny are asked to consider the Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011 and provide comments for submission to Cabinet.

Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) Section 100D
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
Community Plan and LAA Working Papers	Kevin Kewin 020 7364 4075 Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London E14 2BG

3 Background

- 3.1 The Local Government Act, 2000, places on local authorities a duty to prepare “community strategies” for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas. Local authorities are now also required to produce a Local Area Agreement, which must be agreed by central government and should be based on the priorities identified in the Community Strategy.
- 3.2 The Community Plan 2020 is the borough’s community strategy. The Council has a statutory responsibility for its preparation and plays a leading role in developing and agreeing the Plan through the Tower Hamlets Partnership. The Community Plan falls within the Budget and Policy Framework and in accordance with the Council’s Constitution, must be agreed by Full Council.

4 Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

- 4.1 The Council’s Constitution, Part 4 – Rules of Procedure, Section 4.3 - Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, as amended, sets out the process for the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, as defined by Article 4 of the Constitution.
- 4.2 Paragraph 2.1 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules
- Require notification of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the referral of such Policy Framework proposals.
 - Provide that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives 10 working days to respond to this consultation.
- 4.3 Paragraph 2.1.4 of these procedure rules requires the Executive (the Cabinet) to take account of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before submitting recommendations to full Council as appropriate.
- 4.4 Paragraph 2.1.5 makes provision for full Council to consider the proposals of the Cabinet and to subsequently adopt them, amend them, refer them back to Cabinet for further consideration or to substitute its own proposals in their place.

5 Community Plan 2020

- 5.1 The existing Tower Hamlets Community Plan has served the Partnership and borough well producing significant outcomes and fostering joint working across the borough, not only with other agencies and organisations but also with local communities through the Local Area Partnerships (LAPs). The national and local context however has changed significantly including the:
- 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games
 - Thames Gateway development
 - Changing Government legislation including the White Paper on Strong and Prosperous Communities and Comprehensive Spending Review 2007
 - Increasing importance of Community Cohesion and Sustainable Communities
- 5.2 It is therefore timely to refresh the Community Plan and for the Partnership to develop a renewed vision and refreshed priorities for Tower Hamlets looking towards 2020.
- 5.3 The involvement of local residents has been central to the Community Plan review with consultation and engagement activities beginning in summer 2007. Based on the key consultation messages from 2005 onwards, over 400 local residents took part in LAP-based events to provide their thoughts and experiences on the borough they want to live in 2020. This was followed up with further consultation with different groups including sessions with the Interfaith Forum, the Disabled Access Panel, Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgendered Forum and additional work with young and older people.
- 5.4 A cross-partnership working group was created to help develop the new Community Plan and LAA, as well as inform the emerging Local Development Framework. As part of their work, they brought together and considered a strategic needs analysis of the borough. The Partnership has also led wider engagement work with partner organisations and stakeholders to ensure that they are involved in the development of the Plan. This has included regular items at CPAGs, a bespoke session with local businesses, a Partnership Away-day in September and a Partnership-wide senior managers conference in November.
- 5.5 The new Community Plan is different in format to the existing plan and aims to:
- articulate the aspirations, needs and priorities in a way that is meaningful to everyone who lives and works in Tower Hamlets
 - strengthen the 'story of place' – in particular the uniqueness and local dimensions of Tower Hamlets
 - highlight the current and future challenges for the borough
 - outline the contributions required from all perspectives in achieving the vision, including everyone who lives and works in the borough
 - strengthen the key objectives and targets so they have a greater partnership focus
- 5.6 To achieve this, the Community Plan is structured in two parts. Part one sets out the Tower Hamlets context highlighting some of the key challenges and opportunities facing the borough through to 2020. It describes the process of producing the Plan and outlines the vision and themes.
- 5.7 Part two of the Plan identifies the specific challenges and aspirations, key priorities and objectives and outlines some of the underpinning strategies and delivery arrangements. The Plan highlights the role that everyone who lives and works in

Tower Hamlets has in contributing. The Plan includes the three year Local Area Agreement targets against which the Partnership will measure progress. These are blank in the draft awaiting final agreement of the Local Area Agreement (see section 6).

- 5.8 The draft Community Plan 2020 has been consulted on across the Partnership both through the Partnership's website, through meetings of the Community Plan Action Groups and a Reader's Panel drawn from the Residents Panel. The feedback from the consultation has been positive. In particular, there was strong support from residents, who generally felt that the plan addressed the main challenges facing the borough and was accessible. In addition, the Readers Panel highlighted the importance of ensuring that the Community Plan is promoted effectively and provided a number of suggestions to support its launch and distribution. The CPAG consultation provided partner organisations with an opportunity to confirm support for the Plan and provide further suggestions for improvement. This feedback has also been used to inform the Plan.
- 5.9 The Tower Hamlets Partnership Management Group (PMG) endorsed strongly the Community Plan 2020 at its meeting on 20 May 2008.
- 5.10 It may be necessary to make some amendments to the detail of the Community Plan 2020 before final publication and agreement. Any amendments will not materially affect them. Cabinet and Full Council will be asked to delegate the authority to make such amendments as are appropriate to the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader (and Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership) and Vice Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

6 Local Area Agreement 2008 - 2011

- 6.1 Tower Hamlets, like all councils, is required to prepare a new Local Area Agreement (LAA) for approval by June 2008. The borough's existing agreement – which began in 2006 - has been a success, helping to improve partnership working and outcomes across a wide range of areas. Local Area Agreements are becoming more significant and a critical part of the new central-local relationship. For example, the Government views them as the primary delivery vehicle for Community Plans and they are the only mechanism through which local government will set targets with central government. The LAA is an agreement which must be based around up to 35 indicators taken from the government's new national indicator set of 198.
- 6.2 Our LAA has been developed alongside the Community Plan and is structured around its themes and priorities. There has been considerable Partnership discussion around the criteria and rationale for including particular indicators within the borough's agreement. The accompanying note submitted to GoL (appendix 2) provides a more detailed narrative justification of the Partnership's proposed indicators.
- 6.3 LAAs are a negotiation between the Partnership, represented by the Council, and Central Government, represented by GoL. During the negotiation process, government may question both the inclusion and potential exclusion of particular priorities and indicators, as well as the ambition and stretch of the associated targets. The borough's proposed agreement is attached as appendix 3. In a number of cases, targets cannot be set until 2009/10 and some indicators are still subject to ongoing negotiations.

- 6.4 The deadline for submitting the proposed LAA to Government Office for London was 30 May 2008. To allow full discussion of the LAA with the Council's new Leadership, we negotiated a submission date of 6 June with GoL, with the final LAA submitted with Full Council approval by 27 June 2008. This is a legal requirement through a direction from the Secretary of State.
- 6.5 The proposed LAA was submitted in consultation with the Leader of the Council (and Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership) and the Vice-Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership.
- 6.6 Once the LAA is agreed finally, the targets will be included in the Community Plan 2020.

7 Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

- 7.1 The Community Plan and Local Area Agreement set out local priorities and specific targets for the next three year's for the Council and its key partners. The plan sets out a framework for allocating and directing financial resources both for the year ahead and the medium term, so that resources are aligned with priorities.

8 Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 8.1 Section 4(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 imposes a duty on local authorities to prepare a community strategy for "promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area."
- 8.2 Under section 4(2) a local authority has the power to modify the community strategy to reflect changes in local needs. In preparing or modifying its community strategy, a local authority must consult and seek the participation "of such persons as they consider appropriate" and have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 8.3 Article 4 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Community Strategy forms part of the Council's policy framework which must be approved by full Council. The process for developing the framework contained in Rule 2 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules provides that recommendations to Council shall be submitted by Cabinet which shall have taken account of the responses received to the consultation and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report facilitates compliance with the procedure.
- 8.4 The Secretary of State has directed that the approved draft Local Area Agreement must be submitted to GoL by 27 June 2008.

9 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 9.1 Equal opportunities are central to the Community Plan and Local Area Agreement and are articulated through the Plan's overarching aspiration to create One Tower Hamlets. The Plan has been informed by a full Equalities Impact Assessment.

10 Anti-Poverty Implications

- 10.1 The Community Plan and Local Area Agreement support the delivery of the inclusive vision of the Tower Hamlets Partnership. There is a strong focus on poverty with the Plan, and the proposed LAA features a number of ambitious targets relating to the reduction of poverty.

11 Sustainable Action For A Greener Environment

- 11.1 The Community Plan explicitly embraces priorities and objectives with a strong focus on environmental sustainability and a greener environment. The LAA features an ambitious target relating to the reduction of CO2 emissions within the borough.

12 Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The Community Plan provides a clear, public statement of the Tower Hamlets Partnership's strategic priorities. The LAA sets out some of the key performance indicators and targets against which the performance of the public services – including Council services – will be assessed.
- 12.2 Since the Community Plan is reflected in the service plans and resource allocation of all the service providers in the borough, financial and other services risks within the council are carried by individual Directorates. However, failure to achieve the substantive goals of the Community Plan would place the reputation of the Council at risk, both locally and nationally.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020

Appendix 2: Tower Hamlets LAA Supporting Narrative

Appendix 3: Tower Hamlets LAA Targets