

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

REPORT OF THE CABINET

11 JUNE 2008

To receive the report of the Cabinet at its meeting held on Wednesday **11 June 2008**.

The Members who attended our meeting were: -

Councillor Lutfur Rahman (Chair)	(Leader of the Council)
(Deputy Leader of the Council)	
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	(Lead Member, Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships)
Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed	(Lead Member, Culture and Leisure)
Councillor Anwarra Ali	(Lead Member, Health and Wellbeing)
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	(Lead Member, Employment and Skills)
Councillor Marc Francis	(Lead Member, Housing and Development)
Councillor Claire Hawkins	(Lead Member, Children's Services)
Councillor Joshua Peck	(Lead Member, Resources and Performance)
Councillor Abdal Ullah	(Lead Member, Cleaner, Safer, Greener)

Other Members present: -

Councillor Shahid Ali	
Councillor Abdul Asad	(Chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	(Leader Liberal Democrat Group and Scrutiny Lead Member: Health)
Councillor Ahmed Hussain	(Scrutiny Lead Member: Learning, Achievement and Leisure)
Councillor Denise Jones	
Councillor Abjol Miah	(Leader of the Respect Group)
Councillor Oliur Rahman	(Leader of the Respect Unity Coalition Group)
Councillor Salim Ullah	(Chair Appeals Committee and Scrutiny Lead Member: Living Safely)

1. Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement (CAB 006/089)

We agreed the special circumstances and reasons for urgency as follows:

- The report before us was unavailable for public inspection within the standard timescales set out in this Authority's Constitution, because of the continuation of negotiations with Government Office for London over the indicators and targets to be included within this Council's Local Area Agreement which it had been anticipated would be completed in time for publication of the agenda before us.
- 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 of this Authority.

We considered a report (attached as Appendix A to this council report) which informed us that: -

Community Plan 2020

- It presented through its appendices– the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-11.
- These comprised elements of this Authority’s Budget and Policy Framework and in accordance with the requirements of the associated constitutional procedure the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be tabled at our meeting on 11 June 2008 for Members’ consideration. We were required by this Authority’s Constitution to take account of the views of our Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before submitting our recommendations to Council on 25 June 2008.
- 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.
- The Community Plan 2020 is the borough’s community strategy. This Authority 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.
- The existing Tower Hamlets Community Plan had served the Partnership and Borough well producing significant outcomes and fostering joint working across the borough. However the national and local context however had changed significantly and it was 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.
- The involvement of local residents has been central to the Community Plan review with consultation and engagement activities beginning in summer 2007, followed up with further consultation with different groups within the Community.
- 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 new Community Plan aimed 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

To achieve this, the Community Plan is structured in two parts:

- Part one set out the Tower Hamlets context highlighting some of the key challenges and opportunities facing the borough through to 2020. It described the process of producing the Plan and outlines the vision and themes.
 - Part two identified the specific challenges and aspirations, key priorities and objectives and outlines some of the underpinning strategies and delivery arrangements.
- The Plan included the three year Local Area Agreement targets against which the Partnership would measure progress. These were awaiting final agreement of the Local Area Agreement.
 - The draft Community Plan 2020 has been consulted on across the Partnership in a variety of ways. The feedback from the consultation has been positive, with strong support from residents, who generally felt that the plan addressed the main challenges facing the borough and was accessible. The Tower Hamlets Partnership Management Group strongly endorsed the Community Plan 2020 at its meeting on 20 May 2008.

Local Area Agreement 2008 - 2011

- This Authority, like all authorities, was required to prepare a new Local Area Agreement (LAA) for approval by June 2008. Local Area Agreements were becoming a critical part of the relationship between central and local government, with Government viewing them as the primary delivery vehicle for Community Plans. They were the only mechanism through which local government would set targets with central government. The LAA was required to comprise up to 35 indicators taken from Government's new national indicator set of 198.
- This Authority's LAA had been developed alongside the Community Plan and was 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.
- LAAs are a negotiation between the Partnership, represented by the Council, and Central Government, represented by Government Office for London (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. This Borough's proposed LAA was attached at Appendix 3 to the report before us. In a number of cases, targets could not be set until 2009/10 and some indicators were still subject to ongoing negotiations.
- The deadline for submitting the proposed LAA to GoL was 30 May 2008. To allow full discussion of the LAA with this Authority's new Leadership, Officers of the Authority negotiated ,with GoL, a submission date of 6 June with the final

LAA to be submitted with Full Council approval by 27 June 2008. This was a legal requirement through a direction from the Secretary of State. However the proposed LAA was submitted after consultation with the Leader of the Council (and Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership) and the Vice-Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

- Once the LAA was finally agreed, the targets would be included in the Community Plan 2020.

We considered and noted the advice and comments of our Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in respect of the report before us, detailed in a paper presented to us for our consideration, by our Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Asad.

Our Chair commented that he had attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous evening and had found the debate relating to both the Community Plan 2020/ LAA and the Strategic Plan/ BVPP very constructive. Our Chair requested that the final draft of these documents, to be presented to Council, reflect the advice and comments arising from these deliberations, as he considered this would strengthen the aspirations contained therein.

Our Interim Service Head Strategy and Performance, Mr Steward, at the request of our Chair, responded to the matters raised by our Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 10th June 2008, in his introduction of the report. Mr Steward:

- Outlined the chronology and methodology associated with the development of the Community Plan 2020/ LAA, and the themes and priorities that had emerged.
- Set out the next steps including strengthening these documents in the areas indicated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and in particular with reference to the support of affordable housing and social for rent housing provision, prior to submission to Council on 25th June 2008.
- Advised us that once the LAA had been agreed with Government, the targets would be included in the Community Plan with those for the first 3 years being explicit to facilitate accountability.
- Assured us that although only 35 indicators had been selected for the LAA from the national basket of 198, on the basis of partnership response and an evaluation of their contribution to the theme One Tower Hamlets, the Authority's performance would continue to be measures against all 198 indicators.
- Informed us that as many of the indicators in the LAA were new a review would be undertaken at the end of the first year of the agreement to establish if the targets were sufficiently robust and stretching.

Our detailed discussion of the draft Community Plan 2020/ LAA, during which we broadly welcomed the proposals and also extended our thanks to our Councillor Jones, former Leader of the Council, Our Councillor Asad, former Lead Member Employment and Skills, and our Partnership Management Group and the Officer team for their contribution to the development of the Plan and Agreement before us, focused on the following:

- The need for further Member level discussion around the setting of targets relating to provision of social for rent housing, units of accommodation of 3 or

more bedrooms and homelessness. Our Councillor Francis, Lead Member Housing and Development, commented that Government had recognised this Authority's good performance in relation to the latter 2 areas, but considered that, in partnership with the voluntary and community sectors, performance could be stretched to improve outcomes still further. Our Councillor Francis requested that we be provided with figures for targets not included in the draft LAA prior to its consideration at Council.

- The relevance of indicator NI 154 "Net Additional Homes" to the Borough and instead a greater focus on indicator NI155 "Affordable Homes delivered".
- The inclusion of a more ambitious target relating to indicator NI 158 "Decent Homes" once funding from Government was secured as a result of the achievement of a 2 star Arms Length Management Organisation.
- Consideration that inclusion of indicator NI 160 "Local authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services" amongst the 35 indicators of the LAA would have been a positive step for the Authority, but understanding the reasons why it had not been included, it was requested that it be used as a local indicator for the time being.
- Strengthening the emphasis on provision of affordable housing and family housing.
- Consideration that further work was needed to embed the Community Plan theme "One Tower Hamlets" across the other 4 themes. Also with reference to page 14 of Appendix 1 "Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020", to the report before us, consideration that the section setting out how to achieve "One Tower Hamlets" should be made more distinct from the previous section and required greater clarity as to responsibility for delivery.
- Consideration that an even more accessible version of the Community Plan 2020/ LAA should be made available for young people with a view to usage as a citizenship tool in schools.
- Consideration that overall the sense of poverty and ill health in Tower Hamlets was underplayed in the draft Community Plan 2020/ LAA and the inclusion of further statistical and narrative detail was required in parts of the document relating to health and housing.
- The need to ensure that the Community Plan theme "A Healthy Community" was cross referenced to and congruent with the Public Health Strategy.
- The need to communicate the priorities and objectives relating to the Community Plan theme "One Tower Hamlets" to staff at all levels of this Authority, and that to help embed reflection upon the meaning of these to individuals that consideration be given to the addition of a paragraph to all committee reports entitled "One Tower Hamlets Implications".

Our Interim Service Head Strategy and Performance, Mr Steward, and our Chief Executive Mr Smith, responded to requests for clarification/ assurance, in relation to a number of matters including:-

- The furnishing of Members with the targets for inclusion in the Community Plan 2020/LAA, to be derived from the LAA agreed with Government, as soon as practically possible.
- With reference to page 30 of Appendix 1 "Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020", to the report before us, the absence of detail relating to the new structure of the Tower Hamlets Partnership.
- With reference to page 5 of Appendix 3 "Tower Hamlets LAA Targets", to the report before us, the deferral of target setting relating to the indicator NI7

“Environment for a thriving third sector” and the timescales envisaged for the setting thereof.

Our Councillor Rofique Ahmed, Lead Member Culture and Leisure, considered it appropriate, that our Chief Executive should also consult our Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, prior to making any amendments to the Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-11 prior to final publication. Our Councillor Ahmed therefore proposed, for our consideration, that the recommendation contained in paragraph 2.2 of the report before us be amended accordingly.

Our Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, considered that targets pertaining to the Priority “Support vibrant town centres and a cleaner, safer public realm” and the Indicator NI195 “Improved street and environmental cleanliness” detailed in Appendix 3 “Tower Hamlets LAA Targets”, to the report before us, were not sufficiently ambitious; and accordingly proposed an amendment to the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report, for our consideration, as follows:-

“That the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 (Appendix 3) be endorsed subject to amendment of the provisional target for NI195 “Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness” as follows:

- Detritus - to 2008/09 13%, 2009/10 11% and 2010/11 10%
- Fly Posting - to 2008/09 3%, 2009/10 2% and 2010/11 2%.”

Our Chair then **Moved** the recommendations contained in the report before us, taking account of the amendments proposed by our Councillors R. U. Ahmed and J. Peck.

We endorsed the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020, attached at Appendix 1 to the report (CAB 006/089), and Local Area Agreement 2008-2011, attached at Appendix 3 to the report (CAB 006/089), the latter subject to amended targets for NI195 “Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness” set out below. We further agreed that Council be recommended to approve the Plan and LAA, subject to any appropriate amendments to ensure that they are accurate and reflect the views of Members;

We authorised our Chief Executive, after consultation with our Leader of the Council, (and Chair of the Partnership), our Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, and our Vice-Chair of the Partnership, to make appropriate amendments to the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and LAA 2008-11 in advance of final publication.

We agreed that the provisional target for NI195 “Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness” within the Tower Hamlets LAA Targets (Appendix 3) be amended as follows:

- Detritus - to 2008/09 13%, 2009/10 11% and 2010/11 10%
- Fly Posting - to 2008/09 3%, 2009/10 2% and 2010/11 2%.”

We therefore recommend Council to: -

1. Approve the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020, attached at Appendix 1 to the report (CAB 006/089), and Local Area Agreement 2008-2011, attached at Appendix 3 to the report (CAB 006/089), subject to any appropriate amendments to ensure that they are accurate and reflect the views of Members;
2. Authorise the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, (and Chair of the Partnership), the Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, and the Vice-Chair of the Partnership, to make appropriate amendments to the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Local Area Agreement 2008-11 in advance of final publication.

2. Strategic Plan, Annual Report and Best Value Performance Plan (CAB 007/089)

We agreed the special circumstances and reasons for urgency as follows:

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

We considered a report (attached as Appendix B to this council report) which informed us that: -

- It presented Tower Hamlets Council's Strategic Plan (2008/09) (Section 3), the end of year monitoring update on the full 12 months of the 2007/08 Strategic Plan (Section 4), the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and Annual Report (Section 5), and information on how these relate to this Authority's financial outturns (Section 6).
- The Strategic Plan and BVPP comprised elements of this Authority's Budget and Policy Framework and in accordance with the requirements of the associated constitutional procedure the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be tabled at our meeting on 11 June 2008 for Members' consideration. We were required by this Authority's Constitution to take account of the views of our Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before submitting our recommendations to Council on 25 June 2008.

Strategic Plan 2008/09

- The Strategic Plan 2008/09 had been developed to ensure that it:

- Reflects this Authority's contribution to delivering the Community Plan for 2008/09
 - Establishes a new set of Strategic Indicators based on the indicators within this Authority's new Local Area Agreement plus other priority National Indicators
 - Provides a strategic focus on Key Initiatives which contribute to the delivery of agreed priorities; more detailed activities will be incorporated within Directorate and Team Plans.
- The plan has been informed by discussions with Cabinet members to prioritise key initiatives.
 - The structural elements comprised vision, context, the Council's role, measuring progress, key initiatives/ milestones, planning and monitoring framework and use of resources.
 - It summarised the strategic themes (One Tower Hamlets, A Great Place to Live, A Prosperous Community, A Safe and Supportive Community, A Healthy Community) and associated priorities and objectives.
 - The outturn, target and benchmarks for key measures were currently being collated following year end and would be included within the final draft to Council. As a number of the measures and indicators were new, it might not be possible to provide baselines or benchmarks in all areas but Officers would endeavour to provide complete data where possible.

Strategic Plan 2007/08 Monitoring Report

- The Council's performance framework required Members to consider the Authority's progress against Strategic Plan Activities every 6 months, and the monitoring report, contained within the report before us, provided an update on the full 12 months of the 2007/08 Strategic Plan, including the number and proportion of milestones achieving performance allocated a red, amber or green traffic lights and analysis of the milestones, in particular the reasons for unsuccessful implementation. Also the criteria for allocating each traffic light status.
- It summarised progress by Community Plan Theme and Directorate.

BVPP and Annual Report

- This Council's Annual Report and Best Value Performance Plan, including an Annual Report on the progress made in 2007/08 would be presented to Full Council on 25 June. This was the last year that the Authority was statutorily required to publish the Best Value Performance Plan by 30th June.
- The BVPP and Annual Report, contained within the report before us, comprised the following key documents which were yet to be finalised:
 - Appendix 2 – Annual Report for 2007/08, which reported on the Authority's progress against key activities and performance indicators in the Strategic Plan. The Annual report content was prescribed by statute relating to the BVPP, therefore differing from the Strategic Plan

monitoring also set out in the report before us, and was principally aimed at local residents.

- Appendix 4 - (BVPI), Local Area Agreement (LAA), Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) and Strategic Plan (SP) – outcomes against targets for 2007/08, which provided outturn and target data for all BVPILAA, LPSA and SP performance indicators. Work was ongoing to verify the outturn data and there may therefore be amendments to the final tables before submission to Council and before final publication. The final columns of the table provided an at-a-glance indication of whether the Authority had achieved its target and whether it had improved compared to last year. Performance could be summarised as follows: of 247 indicators 52.6% were red, with 47.4% green. 60.9% improved, while 28.2% deteriorated and 22 of the indicators remained the same, a number of these had already reached maximum performance.
- Appendix 5 Tables explaining any significant variances between targets and outcomes – above target and below target which required our attention.
- Appendix 6 Statement on Workforce Matters required by Best Value legislation and meeting the Authority's requirement to confirm that it is adopting the Code of Practice in its approach to workforce matters and contracting.
- Appendix 7 Summary of Statement of Accounts which was not currently available was also required by Best Value legislation.

We considered and noted the advice and comments of our Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in respect of the report before us, detailed in a paper presented to us for our consideration, by our Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Asad.

Our Interim Service Head Strategy and Performance, Mr Steward, at the request of our Chair, responded to the matters raised by our Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 10th June 2008, in his introduction of the report.

During our detailed discussion of the draft Strategic Plan and Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP), during which we broadly welcomed the proposals, the following point was also made with reference to Appendix 1 "Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2008/2009", Section 5 "Key Initiatives Year 1: April 2008 – April 2009" – "One Tower Hamlets" :

- Targets for Performance Indicator SI3 "A workforce to reflect the community: percentage of top 5% earners that are disabled" were not sufficiently ambitious.

Our Interim Service Head Strategy and Performance, Mr Steward, responded to requests for clarification/ assurance, in relation to a number of matters including:- With reference to Appendix 1 "Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2008/2009", Section 5 "Key Initiatives Year 1: April 2008 – April 2009" – "One Tower Hamlets"

- The targets for the next 3 years in relation to Performance Indicator SI2 "A workforce to reflect the community: percentage of top 5% earners that are women" were less ambitious than that for the current year.
- The absence of targets for Performance Indicator SI6 "Percentage of Stage 1 complaints completed in time".

Our Councillor Rofique Ahmed, Lead Member Culture and Leisure, considered it appropriate, that our Chief Executive should also consult our appropriate Lead Member prior to making any amendments to the Strategic Plan 2008/09 and Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) prior to final publication. Our Councillor Ahmed therefore proposed, for our consideration, that the recommendation contained in paragraph 2.2 of the report before us be amended accordingly.

Our Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, considered that targets pertaining to the performance Indicator SI7 “Percentage of residents agreeing that the Council provides value for money for the Council Tax I pay” set out in Appendix 1 “Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2008/2009”, Section 5 “Key Initiatives Year 1: April 2008 – April 2009” – “One Tower Hamlets”, in the report before us, were not sufficiently ambitious; and accordingly proposed an amendment to the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report, for our consideration as follows:-

“That this Council’s Strategic Plan 2008/09 (Appendix 1) be endorsed subject to amendment of the provisional target for Performance Indicator SI7 “Percentage of residents agreeing that the Council provides value for money for the Council Tax I pay” set out in Section 5 “Key Initiatives Year 1: April 2008 – April 2009” – “One Tower Hamlets” as follows:

- 2007/08 41%, 2008/9 46% and 2009/10 51%.

Our Chair then **Moved** the recommendations contained in the report before us, taking account of the amendments proposed by our Councillors R. U. Ahmed and J. Peck.

We endorsed this Council's Strategic Plan 2008/09, subject to amended targets for Performance Indicator SI7 “Percentage of residents agreeing that the Council provides value for money for the Council Tax I pay” set out below, and also endorsed the end of year monitoring, Best Value Performance Plan and Annual Report . We further agreed that Council be recommended to approve these Plans, attached at Appendix 1 and 3 to the report (CAB 007/089) respectively, subject to necessary and appropriate amendments to ensure that the plans are accurate, coherent and reflect the views of Members;

We authorised our Chief Executive, after consultation with our Leader of the Council and our appropriate Lead Member, to make appropriate and necessary amendments to the Strategic Plan 2008/09 and BVPP (2007/2008) in advance of final publication.

We agreed that the target for Performance Indicator SI7 “Percentage of Residents Agreeing that the Council Provides Value for Money for the Council Tax I Pay”, within this Council’s Strategic Plan 2008/09 (Appendix 1), Section 5 “Key Initiatives Year 1: April 2008 – April 2009” – “One Tower Hamlets” be amended as follows:

- 2007/08 41%, 2008/9 46% and 2009/10 51%.

We therefore recommend Council to: -

1. That Council approve the Council's Strategic Plan 2008/09, and Best Value Performance Plan, attached respectively at Appendix 1 and 3 to the report (CAB 007/089) **(Attached at Appendix B to this Council report)**, subject to necessary and appropriate amendments to ensure that the plans are accurate, coherent and reflect the views of Members;
2. That the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the appropriate Lead Member, be authorised to make appropriate and necessary amendments to the Strategic Plan 2008/09 and BVPP (2007/2008) in advance of final publication; and

**Councillor Lutfur Rahman
Chair of the Cabinet**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 100D (AS AMENDED)
LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper" number of holder	Tick if copy supplied	If not supplied, name and telephone
Cabinet Agenda – 11/06/08 Record of decisions Cabinet Meeting 11/06/08.		Angus Taylor 020 7364 4333