

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 1 March 2021 at 6.30 p.m., [Online 'Virtual' Meeting -
https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)

This meeting is open to the public to view.

Members:

Chair: Councillor James King

Vice Chair: Councillor Bex White
Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Scrutiny Lead for Children & Education
Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety &
Environment

Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Ehtasham Haque
Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan
Councillor Leema Qureshi
Councillor Andrew Wood

Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration

Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults
Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance

Co-opted Members:

Halima Islam
James Wilson

Co-Optee
Co-Optee

Deputies:

Councillor Peter Golds, Councillor Zenith Rahman, Councillor Mohammed Pappu and Councillor John Pierce

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

Contact for further enquiries:

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SECTION ONE	WARD	PAGE NUMBER(S)
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
To receive any apologies for absence.		
2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS		7 - 8
Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, please see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.		
Members are reminded to declare the nature of the interest and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it's the Members' responsibility to declare any interests form and to update their register of interest form as required by the Code.		
If in doubt as to the nature of your interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services		
3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES		
To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 th January, 2021 and 1 st February, 2021.		
3.1 Minutes of the 25th January, 2021		9 - 42

3.2	Minutes of 1st February, 2021		43 - 90
4.	REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS		
	To receive any petitions (to be notified at the meeting).		
5.	FORTHCOMING DECISIONS	All Wards	91 - 130
	To note the published Forward Plan		
6.	COVID 19 - UPDATE	All Wards	
	The Committee will receive an update from Somen Banerjee – Director of Public Health on the latest position in Tower Hamlets regarding Covid-19 (to be notified at the meeting).		
7.	UNRESTRICTED CABINET REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION		
	The Cabinet reports will be published next week on Tuesday, 23rd February, 2021 and once published can be viewed via this Link		
7.1	Strategic Performance & Delivery Reporting - Q3 2020/21	All Wards	131 - 132
7.2	Budget monitoring report 2020-21 as at 31st December 2020 (period 9)	All Wards	133 - 134
7.3	Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-2024	All Wards	135 - 146
8.	CHALLENGE SESSION REPORT	All Wards	
8.1	Idea Store and Library Services Scrutiny Challenge Session	All Wards	147 - 172
	Recommendations:		
	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the attached Idea Store and Library Services Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and agree the recommendations; and 2. Agree to submit the attached report to the Mayor and Cabinet for executive response. 		
8.2	How does the Council apply evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?	All Wards	173 - 200

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the attached Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and agree the recommendations; and
2. Agree to submit the attached report to the Mayor and Cabinet for executive response.

9. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

To consider and agree pre-decision scrutiny questions/comments to be presented to Cabinet.

(Time allocated – 30 minutes).

10. UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS 201 - 206

The Committee are asked to note the updates from Scrutiny Leads.

11. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

To consider any other unrestricted business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

11 .1 Action Log 2020-21 Update 207 - 214

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.”

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

SECTION TWO

WARD

**PAGE
NUMBER(S)**

**13. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL
BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS
URGENT**

To consider any other exempt/ confidential business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

Next Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 22 March 2021 at 6.30 p.m. to be held in Online 'Virtual' Meeting -
<https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests. In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

Further Advice contact: Janet Fasan Divisional Director Legal and Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4800.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.32 P.M. ON MONDAY, 25 JANUARY 2021

ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)

Members Present:

Councillor James King (Chair)	
Councillor Bex White (Vice-Chair)	– Scrutiny Lead for Children and Education
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	– Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety & Environment
Councillor Marc Francis	
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	– Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration
Councillor Denise Jones	
Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan	– Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults
Councillor Leema Qureshi	– Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance
Councillor Andrew Wood	

Co-opted Members Present:

Halima Islam	– Co-Opted Member
James Wilson	– Co-Opted Member

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Asma Begum

Officers Present:

Onyekachi Ajisafe	– (Strategy & Policy Officer, Strategy, Policy & Performance)
Marcus Barnett	– Detective Chief Superintendent - BCU Commander
Adam Boey	– (Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)
Ann Corbett	– (Divisional Director, Community Safety)
Sharon Godman	– (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)
Mike Hamer	– Metropolitan Police Service
Afazul Hoque	– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Daniel Kerr	– (Strategy and Policy Manager)

David Knight	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)
Calvin McLean	– Head of Neighbourhood (Operations)
Filuck Miah	– (Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Policy Team)
Ann Otesanya	– Director of Neighbourhoods Tower Hamlets Homes
Andy Port	– The Metropolitan Police Service
Barry Scales	– (Project Lead Community Safety Transformation)
Chris Weavers	– Chair of Safer Neighbourhood Board
Joel West	– (Democratic Services Team Leader (Committee))

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received at this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

The following Members for transparency declared a potential interest in relation to the Item 9 Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions:

- I. Councillor Marc Francis due to his wife Councillor Rachel Blake being the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing; and
- II. Councillor Ehtasham Haque due to wife Councillor Sabina Akhtar being the Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The Chair **Moved** and it was: -

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11th January 2020 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair was authorised to sign them accordingly.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil Items

5. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted

6. COVID-19 UPDATE

The Committee received an update from Covid-19 from Somen Banerjee – Director of Public Health, the main points of the questioning maybe summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Asked if vaccines would be “thrown away” rather than being given as second doses or to ‘other cohorts’.? Noted that with the Pfizer vaccine there is a risk of wasting the vaccine because of its short shelf-life of 3.5 days and therefore the GP Care Group has had a group of people who they can be contacted at short notice and to date agencies have managed to not waste a significant percentage of the Pfizer vaccine and the system does appear to be working. Also, when there is an increased availability of the AstraZeneca vaccine this will not be such an issue given that it can be stored and transported at regular fridge temperature like flu vaccines, with a shelf life of over six months.
- ❖ Asked if the vaccine uptake has been lowering among minority ethnic groups and what are the barriers to uptake within the Covid-19 vaccination programme and are there any comparisons in the uptake of the Influenza vaccine. Noted that Initial data is showing lower rates for those from BAME groups aged 80 plus compared to those aged 80 plus and white.
- ❖ Commented that the testing positivity rate seemed high and wondered how confident can LBTH be in testing assisting in the controlling the spread of Covid-19. Noted that (i) overall that there is a high level of willingness to take up the Covid-19 vaccines. However, marked differences exist by ethnicity, with the Black population the most likely to be Covid-19 vaccine hesitant followed by the South Asian community ; and (ii) there is an element of people having concerns about the vaccine however it is important to recognise that a key factor in the over eighties is that people want to go to community-based vaccination sites. However, the GP Care Group will be contacting those individuals who are not taking up vaccine and talking through what the issues are and how do to resolve those issues.
- ❖ Commented that there has been additional Government funding for increasing that vaccine uptake and therefore how will LBTH be making the decisions about how such funding will be used in the most effective way to target those communities where there is any vaccine hesitancy?
- ❖ Commented that whilst generally communities have high positivity towards taking vaccines agencies should still be pushing testing above national average and seeking to expand the testing capacity.
- ❖ Noted initially the expectation was that high levels were anticipated in the Bangladeshi community, but testing rates were lower. Whilst now they are higher by undertaking testing in those areas where there is a high prevalence of the virus which has increased the uptake of testing by those communities.
- ❖ Noted that one should be wary about using the Influenza vaccination data as a proxy for issues around Covid e.g. for the Black population

there has always been a low uptake for Influenza vaccinations and as mentioned earlier this is also the case for Covid but for the South Asian community their Influenza uptake has been better than the average which is the opposite of what is being seen with Covid. Also, with the Influenza vaccine you can get that through the local GP or the Community Pharmacist which might be underpinning the inequalities in the uptake of vaccines.

- ❖ Noted that alongside dealing with the numbers of Covid patients the NHS must meet the needs of patients requiring admission for other forms of treatment.
- ❖ Asked if the Nightingale hospital at London's ExCel was at capacity and noted that whilst it was near full capacity that facility takes in patients from an area wider than Tower Hamlets.
- ❖ Noted that from mid-February 2021 those residents with underlying health conditions **e.g.** diabetes, high cholesterol, or asthma will be vaccinated.
- ❖ Agreed that it is important that it is important this group of residents vaccinated as quickly as possible.
- ❖ Noted that work is ongoing with the local GP Care Group and pharmacies to offer the coronavirus vaccine to help with the Government's aim of vaccinating everyone in the most vulnerable groups identified by the middle of February 2021.
- ❖ Noted that considerable work is being done by the Council's Divisional Director of Communications and his Team with both national and local media to ensure that there are effective communications to help overcome challenges such as vaccine hesitancy and to increase uptake **e.g.** Bangla TV the Bengali language television channel.

Accordingly, the Chair thanked Somen Banerjee – Director of Public Health for his presentation and for the high level of detail that he had provided.

7. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT

7.1 ASB - Review the effectiveness of partnership response to ASB and the quality of service residents and victims of ASB receive

The Committee received a presentation from Councillor Asma Begum (Deputy Mayor & Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities); Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety); and Calvin Mclean (Head of Neighbourhood Operations). In addition, the Chair informed the meeting that Chris Weavers (Chair of Safer Neighbourhood Board – SNB)) was in attendance to share the Boards perspective on the effectiveness of partnership response and the quality of service. The main points of the discussion maybe summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ Commented that it seemed be confusing for tenants and residents as to who they should report anything causing a nuisance or annoyance **e.g.** their Registered Social Landlord or the Council?

- ❖ Noted that through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF) which is a partnership between housing associations (registered providers) and the Council has worked hard to make reporting of ASB as straightforward as possible with an online portal [Report anti-social behaviour - Tower Hamlets Homes](#) which has meant Tower Hamlets appears second in the list of London boroughs with the highest rate of reported anti-social behaviour (ASB). With the information the Council and its partners now have there is increased confidence in reporting which in turn encourages others to report ASB and therefore Tower Hamlets is getting an increasing number of reports of ASB **e.g.** between April and December last year there were 9k incidents of ASB were reported.
- ❖ Indicated that they wanted anti-social behaviour tackled and to reduce the harm that it causes. Commented that all residents have the right to feel safe in their homes and the community, including businesses and visitors to the Borough, which is why it is important that reducing anti-social behaviour needs to be a priority for the Council, the Police and for other members of the Tower Hamlets Community Safety Partnership.
- ❖ Expressed concern at the apparent use of motor transport to bring people to locations to in the Borough; drift driving and apparently many drivers/passengers are not Tower Hamlets residents? Noted that Tower Hamlets has introduced the Liveable Streets programme which aims to improve the look and feel of public spaces in neighbourhoods across the Borough and to design out issues such as vehicle-borne anti-social behaviour.
- ❖ Wanted to know what is being done to address the illegal use of nitrous oxide for its psychoactive effect? Noted that whilst there is currently no penalty for possession nitrous oxide it is such a big issue for residents and features in a lot of residence complaints and around rowdy inconsiderate behaviour. Therefore, there is currently a consultation on the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). The PSPO can be introduced in a specific public area where the Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that certain conditions have been met **e.g.** The first test concerns the nature activities that have taken place have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or it is likely that activities will take place and that they will have a detrimental effect on the area.
- ❖ In response to questions noted that as part of the pre-consultation exercise there were discussions with groups of young people and third sector organisations. This was because the Council did not want to have an adverse impact on and to criminalize young people. Accordingly, the Council wanted to make sure that there is a proper support **e.g.**, an education program around the dangers of nitrous oxide. Noted the Council are currently consulting and have so far received approximately 100 responses in the past two weeks as it is a big issue for residents and in accordance with the substance Misuse Strategy as agreed by the Mayor and Cabinet in 2020 it has the key strands of treatment/recovery and regulation/enforcement.

- ❖ After questioning officers noted that the SNB is satisfied that the appropriate data sharing arrangements are in place between the Board, Council, Police Services, and other agencies. Noted that in addition to patterns of behaviour certain things drive ASB the night-time economy and transport nodes being two significant features. In addition, there is a direct correlation between the number of licensed premises/restaurants and major Underground/DLR interchanges with the highest incidences of ASB.
- ❖ In response to questions noted local concerns regarding and lost police operational time when police officers are withdrawn from duty in Tower Hamlets for the purpose of policing a) demonstrations in Central London and b) requirements to cover security activities in Central London. In response it was noted that whilst the SNB were not informed of every abstraction for every ward as it happens the Board does take a close interest in the levels of abstractions and their impact on policing in the Borough. Noted (i) that the SNB receives regular reports on the patterns/activity and what BCU is doing to try minimise such attractions; (ii) the health and safety issues regarding Airbnb during the pandemic in relation to such properties being used for large scale parties that breach Covid regulations and the need for ensure that all landlords are made aware of their responsibilities and that action will be taken if their property is used in breach of the Covid guidelines.

Finally, the Chair thanked Councillor Asma Begum; Ann Corbett; Calvin Mclean; and Chris Weavers for their presentation and participation in the discussions on this topic.

7.2 Police Service Basic Command Units (BCU) views and issues for Tower Hamlets

The Committee received a presentation from Marcus Barnett (Detective Chief Superintendent - BCU Commander - Central East – Hackney and Tower Hamlets); Mike Hamer – (Superintendent Crime Investigations, Central East – Hackney and Tower Hamlets); and Andy Port (Superintendent Neighbourhood Policing, Central East – Hackney and Tower Hamlets) on views and issues for Tower Hamlets: The main points of the discussion maybe summarised as follows:

The Committee

- ❖ Expressed concern over the issue of a prolonged abstractions of Designated Ward Police Officers and the impact that, that can have in dealing with anti-social behaviour as opposed to criminal activity. Noted that because the Basic Command Unit (BCU) officers are trained to certain skills they will have to go and police other parts of London.
- ❖ Following questioning of the officers noted that whenever the BCU faces significant abstraction levels they must look at carefully certain parts of the business that cannot afford to drop below what is describe as an absolute minimum strength requirement. Also, when the BCU

must extract resources on the funded posts they always speak to the partner agency to tell them when they are going to have to abstract officers. Noted whilst the BCU wants to maintain an absolute optimum level now as it stands the BCU has all the officers it should have within all the neighbourhood and ward panels.

- ❖ Expressed concern at the use of Section 60s the BCU has worked hard in recent months around the partnership messaging regarding its utilisation in conjunction with stop and search. Noted that the use of Section 60 is very much about preventing and detecting violence on the streets based on intelligence that says it is believed that there is violence going to occur and weapons will be used or violence has happened and the BCU wants to prevent further violence from happening. It enables officers and others who will come into the BCU to provide support to search people. However, officers still must justify the grounds for any search in a specific geographical location.
- ❖ In addition, were advised that the BCU make sure that partners and the community understand why and when a Section 60 has been authorised through a partnership message to let people know what is being done and why. Noted that on the issue of Section 60 the SNB has taken its use very seriously and in recent months and have closely scrutinised the BCU on this issue and asked questions about whether there is a need to undertake the various searches or whether in fact the searches could be undertaken under other areas of legislation.
- ❖ Noted concerns about the outcome of an incident that had happened during a specific Section 60 that had been authorised a sometime prior to the arrival of the current BCU Commander. The OSC Member who had raised this issue was asked to write directly to BCU Commander to provide more information about that incident.
- ❖ Following further question noted details about Operation Continuum that had developed as a partnership approach to tackle crime, disorder and violence linked to the street-based drug markets. This has enabled the Council and partners to use local knowledge, experience, and resources to support the BCU disrupt and enforce perpetrators of crime and the anti-social behaviour linked to drug dealing. Noted the BCU want to hit drug dealers in the pocket and one of their aims is to seize assets using various aspects of legislation and the Home Office make allocations of seized assts according to formulas based on productivity to different BCUs. Accordingly, in the Metropolitan Police Service there is a fund that supports operations and the most productive BCU's receive a significant share of that money to use in their work around drug dealing.
- ❖ As a result of questioning noted that the Central East – Hackney and Tower Hamlets BCU gets a substantial share of that money through a bidding on an operation-by-operation basis and used to target further drug trafficking.
- ❖ In reply to questioning noted that as 2020 has been a not representative year and it has been difficult to assess what progress has been made in making ward panels more representative. The anecdotal feedback has indicated that they look quite different as different people have been involved because the panel meetings have

taken place at different times of day and it will therefore take a little longer to make any meaningful assessment.

- ❖ Following questioning noted that with the Borough's population changes the BCU are looking at innovative ways for them to continue to reach and touch communities to ensure that residents have access to local policing **e.g.** do residents access services online or reporting through the neighbourhood hubs.
- ❖ As a result of questioning it was noted that Covid is an additional significant police priority and it will continue to be a priority to enforce the legislation but the BCU cannot afford to take their eyes off other areas. As Covid is an addition to the agreed policing priorities which absolutely remain. However, noted that the BCU has been very proactive and very robust around the enforcement of the Covid legislation and particularly in recent weeks around unlicensed music events. Also noted that before fines are issued to rule-breakers, police officers will first:
 - **Engage** with people, to ask why they appear to be breaking the rules.
 - **Explain** the law, stressing the risks to public health and the NHS.
 - **Encourage** them to change their behaviour; and
 - **Enforce** by issuing penalty notices, as a last resort.
- ❖ Noted however that most people in the community have adhered to the legislation which is clear about saving lives and protecting the NHS.

In conclusion, the Chair:

1. **Thanked** Marcus Barnett, Mike Hamer and Andy Port for their presentation and participation in the discussions on this topic.
2. **Indicated** that following consultation with Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety & Environment a report would be prepared for submission to the BCU on areas for continued scrutiny; and
3. **Noted** the offer by Marcus Barnett to return to a future meeting to discuss views and issues for Tower Hamlets BCU.

8. REPORT/PRESENTATION FOR CONSIDERATION

8.1 OSC Review of 2021-22 Budget Proposals

The Committee received and noted the draft copy of the Review of 2021-22 Budget Proposals it was noted that there had been proposed new elements for the Council's Budget Capital Programme, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure and income and other changes to savings.

Following a full and wide-ranging discussion it was **agreed** to:

- **Defer** detailed consideration of this report until the 1st of February Reserve Budget meeting; and

- **Formally** request the Interim Monitoring officer's approval to moving the start time of Monday night's Reserve OSC Budget meeting to an earlier start at 4:00 p.m. to facilitate discussions.

9. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF UNRESTRICTED CABINET PAPERS

Following comments by the Committee the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions (PDSQ) were agreed for submission to the Cabinet on the 27th January 2021 (See attached appendix).

10. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

The Committee **noted** the updates that had been submitted from the Scrutiny Leads (Attached as appendices to these minutes).

11. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

Nil Items

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

As the agenda circulated contained no exempt/ confidential reports and there was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public to allow for its consideration.

13. EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil Items

14. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL) CABINET PAPERS

Nil Items

15. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil Items

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.

**Chair, Councillor James King
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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CABINET

Wednesday, 27 January 2021 at 5.30 p.m.
Online 'Virtual' Meeting - <https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

The meeting is open to the public to attend.

Contact for further enquiries:

Matthew Mannion, Democratic Services,
1st Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG
Tel: 020 7364 4651
E-mail: matthew.mannion@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk>

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For further information including the Membership of this body and public information, see the main agenda.

5 .1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

3 - 14

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to unrestricted business to be considered.

Item 6.1 The Council's 2021-22 Budget Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-24	
Questions	Response
<p>In the Capital Programme it puts £15m aside for purchase of housing for Temporary Accommodation. Is this a new fund or the continuation of an existing programme/agreement?</p>	<p>This is a continuation of an existing programme that was originally approved in 2016/17. An increase in budget from an already approved £24.597m to £30m was approved as part of the November 2020 Cabinet report</p>
<p>Section 3.10.8 Allowing for the stated 8% increase to the High Needs Block what is the accrued deficit that will be bought forward?</p>	<p>The accrued deficit bought forward from 2019/20 was a total DSG deficit of £11.8m, of which £13.2m was attributable to the high needs block (schools block surpluses offset) we are currently forecasting that the in year high needs block will be balanced for 2020/21 and therefore the deficit bought forward would be at the same level. (Answered to James also)</p>
<p>Section 3.10.10 As the Schools Forum confirmed some areas will not be de-delegated, such as SLS, as part of the formal budget setting process when and where will the Council confirm the budget arrangements for those non de-delegated areas of budget?</p>	<p>The SLS service is funded through the high needs block. The budget for high needs is included in the budget summary at summary level and included in detail in the budget book. As part of the significant high needs overspend, all costs within the high needs block have been reviewed including the SLS service costs to support the long-term sustainability of funding to schools who are delivering the majority of high needs support.</p>
<p>Section 3.11.27 states “No further additions to the HRA will be considered until the two reports that Savills are working on are completed” However, the Council appointed Savills in January 2020, “to review the borrowing and investment capacity within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and other opportunities available to deliver affordable housing, in the light of the abolition of the HRA debt cap and potential introductions of new flexibilities for the reinvestment of Right-to-buy receipts. The primary driver was to establish if additional new homes could be delivered alongside investment in the existing stock including fire safety and energy efficiency works.” Could some of the draft finding be shared with the Cabinet and O&S committee so to consider how realistic the figure of £232.768m is for the delivery of the first 1,000 council homes programme?</p>	<p>The impact of ongoing stock conditions works, fire safety and energy efficiency works impact on the delivery of the second 1,000 homes. The Business Plan has been costed based on estimated costs of schemes either on site or due to be going on site and therefore the figure of £232.768m is deemed a realistic cost of the delivery of this programme.</p>

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<p>On the 23 September 2020 the Cabinet heard that “11.3.7 The HRA Business Plan Review, which has recently been completed, has established that there is sufficient funding available, for the capital works identified through the existing stock condition surveys, the anticipated costs of fire and building safety works that are expected from new regulations and the delivery of the first 1,000 council homes.” Could the updated HRA Business Plan Review be circulated with the budget papers? https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=172684</p>	<p>The summary sheet detailing the financial position of the 30-year HRA Business Plan has been provided separately.</p>
<p>Regarding section “3.11.74 The cumulative impact on the HRA will not be clear until the various reforms all take effect. Provision has been made within the HRA MTFP for an increase in bad debts could the Council outline the provision that has been made?</p>	<p>The provision for bad debts for tenant rents held on the balance sheet is £4.168m. There is a revenue budget of £600k to increase this provision.</p>
<p>Considering the highlighted areas of the Social Housing White Paper in the Cabinet report, is the Council reconsidering bring Tower Hamlets Homes ‘in house’ and if so, what is the timeline that the Council is working towards?</p>	<p>Cabinet agreed to extend the THH management agreement in July 2019 for 4 years, from 2020, with a possible 4-year extension beyond that. The new agreement was signed in July 2020, so it is in the first year.</p>
<p>Capital works to Parks 3.12.43 “Capital works are proposed for Victoria Park in 2021-22” has the Bonner Gate been included in the capital works proposal?</p>	<p>The Bonner Gate repairs will be completed under the parks repairs and maintenance budget. As the gate is listed, quotes have been obtained from specialist restoration firms who were recommended by English Heritage and the works will be scheduled to be undertaken as soon as the procurement is complete.</p>
<p>3.12.51 What level of funding review is needed for Seahorse Homes Ltd? When will the report go to Cabinet? And is the impact on the future supply of housing likely to be considerable?</p>	<p>Potential funding sources for Seahorses homes was set out in the Cabinet report in February 2017 that agreed to set up the company. Since then housing market conditions have changed and treasury conditions have changed in relation to loans. These require a review of the potential funding sources, the outcome of which will be reported to Cabinet. Seahorses housing activities are not currently included in the strategy for increasing affordable housing supply in the borough and therefore any impact is not deemed considerable</p>
<p>Has the “Income Through Housing Companies - reprofile of agreed saving RES08/18-19 SAV / COP 001 / 21-22 (250)” been identified by Savills? If so, please could the report be circulated to the committee?</p>	<p>The saving RES08/18-19 SAV / COP 001 / 21-22 relates to affordable housing within the general fund and has therefore not been included within the HRA Business Plan as part of Savills work</p>

Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions – and responses **Cabinet 27 January 2021**

<p>Is there a concern that with the financial pressures and changes to that the Council's reliance on the staffing reduction outlined in the Integrated Commissioning staffing reductions SAV / HAC 004 / 21-22 may increase the risk to adult social care delivery in the borough?</p>	<p>The staffing reduction outlined is already in place and was implemented in August 2020 providing some in year savings in 2020/21 which are being permanently captured as savings in this MTFs. It ensures sufficient capacity at the right levels to ensure that commissioning work can be maintained - CCG roles within the team were unaffected by this re-structure. The service operates as a joint commissioning function across the Council and CCG supporting outcomes across health, social care, and broader wellbeing in line with best practice.</p>
<p>Could the committee see the list of the VCS organisations referred to in SAV / HAC 007 / 21-22 (i.e. organisations that have been identified as providing services to violence victims who are admitted to the Royal London Hospital)?</p>	<p>There is one, main charitable organisation working with victims of violence in the royal London Hospital. St Giles Trust UK - a national charity are commissioned by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to work with victims of violence. They offer a wraparound service to victims of violence admitted to the hospital. Discussions will be had with partners and stakeholders to see if funding may be identified to mitigate the unmet need in the trauma unit for victims treated and discharged within 24 hours who are often repeat victims of violence</p>
<p>What has changed between the 6th January and 27th January version of the report (for the General Fund)?</p>	<p>The Cabinet report for 27 January includes the capital programme, the HRA growth proforma and HRA saving proforma (these are included in the proposed growth and proposed savings appendices) and the Lower Tier Services Grant (please refer to paragraph 3.5.24 in the report).</p>
<p>Given that Tower Hamlets has the worst ASB rates in the country and that in the last Residents Survey it was the issue with the highest concern where is the additional capital funding to help with this? (the current £3.4 m is largely an upgrade of the existing CCTV network not an expansion of it)</p>	<p>CCTV is an important component of the Council's response to crime and ASB, although by no means the sole or primary mechanism available to counter its impact. The Council has committed to replacing its existing analogue CCTV network by autumn 2022 with a new digital system that will provide equivalent coverage but much better image quality and reliability. £3.1m of capital funding was approved by Cabinet in July 2020. The detailed project business case has progressed through the Council's internal governance structure, and it is</p>

Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions – and responses **Cabinet 27 January 2021**

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	<p>anticipated that the final confirmation will be provided c. February 2021</p>
<p>Q3 The GLA Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Development Infrastructure Funding Study assumed that all CIL and s106 earned in the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar area had been spent in that area in order to minimise infrastructure funding deficits for that area, is that the assumption guiding the allocation of CIL and s106 monies?</p>	<p>The Council is required to consider the infrastructure needs across the entire borough alongside the income available to fund this infrastructure. It does this through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identifies significant needs boroughwide. The IDP also identifies the income forecast to be secured through CIL and S106. This is higher in some areas, not only because of the level of development, but also the scale of charges which are higher where development sales values are higher. The increased charges are not in balance with the cost of delivering infrastructure items, which is broadly the same across the borough. Given this the Council is required to consider how best it uses the funding secured to support the meeting of needs across the borough.</p> <p>Additionally, infrastructure is often delivered as part of a boroughwide network, such as Secondary Schools and other initiatives are required to cross multiple wards to be effective, such as traffic and highway improvements.</p> <p>The Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS) identifies a range of infrastructure needs for the area over the short, medium and long terms. The Council are working to ensure that all forms of funding at the Council's disposal are used alongside external investment to deliver the requirements of both the DIFS and the boroughwide IDP. The Infrastructure Prioritisation and Financing Delivery Plan (PFDP) referred to in the Cabinet Report will support this work boroughwide, including the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar area.</p> <p>There is a lag time between receiving funding and the delivery of infrastructure, however the area is benefitting from</p>

	<p>considerable use of CIL, S106 and secured external investment, and delivery is accelerating through the current Capital Programme. This includes the use of boroughwide funds to support strategic schemes such as the school and health centre on Wood Wharf. Alongside this, the Council is using the planning system to require developers to deliver a range of schools, health centres and parks on-site on the Isle of Dogs, worth hundreds of millions £'s. This process ties delivery to the time that development happens and can be considered as 'spend' directly in the neighbourhood where development occurs. Additionally, 25% of CIL is spent locally through the Local Infrastructure Fund, which is currently developing a range of improvements to local parks, public realm and more.</p>
<p>6.1.6 Projected Movement in Reserves, item 6.1</p>	
<p>Q1 New Homes Bonus - substantial reserves are due to be maintained £37.8 million by March 2023, what is the long-term plan, if any for this money?</p>	<p>The New Homes Bonus reserve would be utilised to fund any General Fund overspends, including any pressures above government funding for the impacts of the Covid pandemic on increased spend and reduced income. This would include Collection Fund deficit pressures above government funding due to the impact of the pandemic on business rates and council tax.</p>
<p>Q2 What is the estimated loss now in 2020/21 between inflation and interest earned on these reserves? (historically our reserves lost value as inflation exceeded interest earned)</p>	<p>As at November 2020, the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation was 0.3%, down from 0.7% in October. The Council's average income return of 1.01% is higher and therefore the future value of the funds invested is currently maintained.</p>
<p>Appendix 8F Capital Potential Assets for Disposal</p>	
<p>Q1 The list does not include Jack Dash House, which in various previous documents had been listed as an asset the Council wish to sell, what is the plan now for Jack Dash House?</p>	<p>In respect of Jack Dash House, the asset management team are currently undertaking a policy of letting the vacant space. The 4th floor was recently let and other space including the 3rd</p>

Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions – and responses **Cabinet 27 January 2021**

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	<p>floor is currently under offer. These are at commercial rents and include a service charge element. At this time there is no strategy to dispose of it, but it is slowly morphing from an occupational property to effectively an income producing property. These leases are for up to 10 years and will be providing revenue for the Council. There is still the potential to dispose of it at a later stage as it is no longer required as workspace for LBTH employees.</p>
<p>Q2 How confident are we in these values given the changes in the market since the pandemic struck?</p>	<p>Where necessary the Council are obtaining supplemental valuations to reflect any changes in the market. Where these differ from earlier valuations we are advising as appropriate.</p>
<p>Q3 What do the colours mean, green, orange, red on the report?</p>	<p>The colour coding means: Green: capital receipt expected to be received in 2020/21 (short-term) Amber: capital receipt likely but not certain (medium-term) Red: potential to generate a capital receipt but not certain (long-term)</p> <p>CCTV</p>

Item 6.3 Procurement of the Leisure Management Contract	
Questions	Response
<p>Are there any financial risks to the council, if the contact was extended for a further 2 years until 2024?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>The two-year extension to the leisure management contract is being proposed to minimise financial risks to the council. High level options appraisals have determined that externally procuring the leisure management will offer best value for the Council due to the economies of scale that leisure operators are able to access via their supply chain, tax relief, external funding opportunities and specialist leisure operations expertise, which are not available to the Council.</p> <p>Not extending the contract increases the risk that GLL will not be able to repay the management fee to the Council and the Council will need to bear this financial pressure. This is largely due to the previous and existing national and regional lockdowns which limit GLL’s ability to generate income and therefore a surplus from which to repay the Council the management fee. Extending the contract to 2024 enables the leisure market time to recover and for leisure centres operations to approach near normal financial performance and the management fee to be repaid.</p> <p>If the contract is not extended beyond 2022 then the financial risk that the management fee is not repaid to the Council increases significantly. Leisure centres have already been closed for nearly 6 months, which is six months of lost income, with significantly reduced income for the remaining four months since the start of the pandemic. Leisure centres are once again closed due to a national lockdown and it cannot be predicted when they are likely to reopen. This lockdown will continue to generate a financial deficit until the centres reopen and an operational surplus generated.</p> <p>Consequently, whilst we cannot state that there are no risks associated with a two year contract extension due to the fluid nature of the impact of the impact of Covid-19 on leisure provision, there are no specific financial risks identified at this time due to the identified risks being mitigated by the contract extension.</p>

Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions – and responses **Cabinet 27 January 2021**

<p>What happens if the management fee cannot be paid?</p>	<p>As mentioned above, extending the contract significantly decreases the risk that the management fee will not be repaid. However, there is a requirement that GLL repay the management fee, which may be beyond the contract duration period.</p>
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London Borough of Tower Hamlets HRA Business Plan 2020/21+
 Base Version
 HRA Summary

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Financial Year	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	2030.31

HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY

Dwelling rents	66,215,454	68,403,117	72,008,662	74,839,871	77,451,568	79,260,615	80,652,931	82,134,819	83,643,722	85,180,127	86,744,531
Non-dwelling rents	4,311,800	4,434,060	4,522,741	4,613,196	4,705,460	4,799,569	4,895,561	4,993,472	5,093,341	5,195,208	5,299,112
Service charge income	25,393,080	25,868,027	26,314,655	27,201,681	28,121,128	28,683,550	29,257,221	29,842,366	30,439,213	31,047,997	31,668,957
Other income and contributions	115,000	115,575	117,887	120,244	122,649	125,102	127,604	130,156	132,759	135,415	138,123
Total income	96,035,334	98,820,779	102,963,945	106,774,992	110,400,805	112,868,837	114,933,316	117,100,813	119,309,036	121,558,747	123,850,723
Repairs & maintenance	16,798,638	17,338,813	17,833,780	18,265,621	18,680,647	19,095,747	19,477,662	19,867,215	20,264,560	20,669,851	21,083,248
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	53,919,144	54,782,612	54,910,570	56,130,071	57,353,992	58,501,071	59,671,093	60,864,515	62,081,805	63,323,441	64,589,910
Bad debts	616,679	608,713	598,358	600,637	621,618	636,151	647,316	659,202	671,305	683,628	696,176
Dwelling Depreciation	18,104,000	18,379,000	18,705,000	18,828,000	18,839,000	19,859,016	20,224,113	20,595,870	20,974,408	21,359,850	21,752,319
Debt management	431,000	440,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	89,869,461	91,549,138	92,489,708	94,266,330	95,937,256	98,533,986	100,462,184	102,428,803	104,434,078	106,478,770	108,563,653
Net income from services	6,165,873	7,271,641	10,474,237	12,508,662	14,463,549	14,334,851	14,471,133	14,672,010	14,874,957	15,079,977	15,287,070
Interest payable	-2,394,667	-3,496,547	-4,723,581	-5,024,095	-5,010,871	-5,457,303	-6,269,018	-7,243,231	-7,909,058	-8,038,346	-7,903,434
Interest income	574,222	446,033	267,985	227,322	137,143	-65,373	-20,140	10,475	41,891	74,124	107,192
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	4,345,428	4,221,126	6,018,640	7,711,889	9,589,821	8,812,175	8,181,975	7,439,254	7,007,789	7,115,755	7,490,828
Set aside for debt repayment	-1,375,640	-2,060,652	-3,736,195	-4,344,599	-4,257,707	-4,320,183	-4,867,187	-5,429,329	-6,002,679	-6,334,849	-6,251,728
Revenue contributions to capital	-	-	-	-17,588,673	-30,668,583	-4,278,689	-3,097,219	-1,788,005	-778,752	-550,020	-736,011
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	2,969,788	2,160,475	2,282,445	-14,221,383	-25,336,469	213,303	217,569	221,920	226,359	230,886	503,089
HRA Balance brought forward	42,810,285	45,780,073	47,940,548	50,222,993	36,001,610	10,665,140	10,878,443	11,096,012	11,317,932	11,544,291	11,775,177
HRA surplus/(deficit)	2,969,788	2,160,475	2,282,445	-14,221,383	-25,336,469	213,303	217,569	221,920	226,359	230,886	503,089
HRA Balance carried forward	45,780,073	47,940,548	50,222,993	36,001,610	10,665,140	10,878,443	11,096,012	11,317,932	11,544,291	11,775,177	12,278,266
Alert											
Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	10,000,000	10,000,000	5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-5,000,000	-5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	10,000,000	5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

London Borough of Tower Hamlets HRA Business
Base Version
HRA Summary

Year	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Financial	2031.32	2032.33	2033.34	2034.35	2035.36	2036.37	2037.38	2038.39	2039.40	2040.41

HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY

Dwelling rents	88,337,439	89,959,366	91,610,834	93,292,378	95,004,539	96,747,869	98,522,931	100,330,296	102,170,547	104,044,275
Non-dwelling rents	5,405,094	5,513,196	5,623,460	5,735,929	5,850,648	5,967,661	6,087,014	6,208,754	6,332,930	6,459,588
Service charge income	32,302,336	32,948,383	33,607,351	34,279,498	34,965,088	35,664,389	36,377,677	37,105,231	37,847,335	38,604,282
Other income and contributions	140,885	143,703	146,577	149,509	152,499	155,549	158,660	161,833	165,070	168,371
Total income	126,185,755	128,564,648	130,988,222	133,457,313	135,972,773	138,535,468	141,146,282	143,806,114	146,515,881	149,276,517

Repairs & maintenance	21,504,913	21,935,011	22,373,711	22,821,186	23,277,609	23,743,162	24,218,025	24,702,385	25,196,433	25,700,362
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	65,881,708	67,199,342	68,543,329	69,914,196	71,312,480	72,738,729	74,193,504	75,677,374	77,190,921	78,734,740
Bad debts	708,952	721,961	735,206	748,693	762,425	776,407	790,643	805,138	819,896	834,923
Dwelling Depreciation	22,151,943	22,558,851	22,973,174	23,395,047	23,824,606	24,261,989	24,707,337	25,160,795	25,622,508	26,092,625
Debt management	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	110,689,516	112,857,165	115,067,422	117,321,122	119,619,120	121,962,287	124,351,509	126,787,692	129,271,758	131,804,649

Net income from services	15,496,239	15,707,482	15,920,801	16,136,192	16,353,653	16,573,182	16,794,773	17,018,423	17,244,123	17,471,867
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Interest payable	-7,745,366	-7,590,458	-7,438,649	-7,289,876	-7,146,388	-7,023,405	-6,926,132	-6,839,531	-6,759,738	-6,692,800
Interest income	143,841	183,171	226,574	263,132	300,072	324,122	363,537	395,551	410,443	416,159
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	7,894,715	8,300,195	8,708,726	9,109,447	9,507,338	9,873,899	10,232,178	10,574,442	10,894,827	11,195,226

Set aside for debt repayment	-6,126,693	-6,004,159	-5,884,076	-5,766,395	-5,651,067	-5,538,756	-5,458,587	-5,386,465	-5,323,009	-5,261,527
Revenue contributions to capital	-1,082,724	-1,293,567	-2,577,242	-3,143,763	-5,008,239	-4,069,928	-4,503,072	-4,912,047	-5,290,370	-5,646,622
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	685,298	1,002,469	247,407	199,290	-1,151,968	265,215	270,520	275,930	281,449	287,077

HRA Balance brought forward	12,278,266	12,963,564	13,966,032	14,213,440	14,412,730	13,260,762	13,525,977	13,796,496	14,072,426	14,353,875
HRA surplus/(deficit)	685,298	1,002,469	247,407	199,290	-1,151,968	265,215	270,520	275,930	281,449	287,077
HRA Balance carried forward	12,963,564	13,966,032	14,213,440	14,412,730	13,260,762	13,525,977	13,796,496	14,072,426	14,353,875	14,640,952

Alert

Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

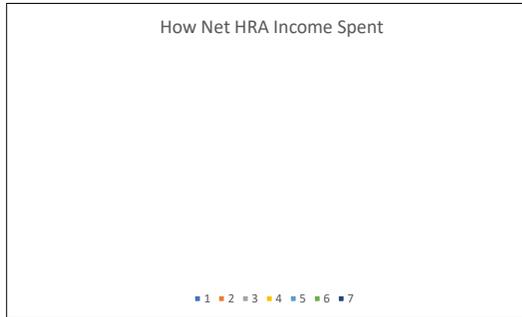
London Borough of Tower Hamlets HRA Business
Base Version
HRA Summary

Year	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Financial	2041.42	2042.43	2043.44	2044.45	2045.46	2046.47	2047.48	2048.49	2049.50

HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY

Dwelling rents	105,952,085	107,894,589	109,872,413	111,886,191	113,936,572	116,024,213	118,149,786	120,313,972	122,517,465
Non-dwelling rents	6,588,780	6,720,556	6,854,967	6,992,066	7,131,907	7,274,545	7,420,036	7,568,437	7,719,806
Service charge income	39,376,368	40,163,895	40,967,173	41,786,516	42,622,247	43,474,692	44,344,185	45,231,069	46,135,691
Other income and contributions	171,738	175,173	178,677	182,250	185,895	189,613	193,405	197,273	201,219
Total income	152,088,971	154,954,213	157,873,229	160,847,024	163,876,621	166,963,063	170,107,413	173,310,751	176,574,180
Repairs & maintenance	26,214,369	26,738,656	27,273,429	27,818,898	28,375,276	28,942,781	29,521,637	30,112,070	30,714,311
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	80,309,435	81,915,623	83,553,936	85,225,015	86,929,515	88,668,105	90,441,467	92,250,297	94,095,303
Bad debts	850,223	865,801	881,662	897,811	914,253	930,994	948,039	965,393	983,062
Dwelling Depreciation	26,571,298	27,058,680	27,554,930	28,060,206	28,574,671	29,098,490	29,631,833	30,174,870	30,727,775
Debt management	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	134,387,324	137,020,761	139,705,957	142,443,929	145,235,715	148,082,371	150,984,976	153,944,629	156,962,451
Net income from services	17,701,647	17,933,452	18,167,272	18,403,095	18,640,906	18,880,693	19,122,437	19,366,122	19,611,729
Interest payable	-6,636,545	-6,577,008	-6,512,792	-6,443,771	-6,342,395	-6,215,547	-6,091,236	-5,969,411	-5,850,023
Interest income	421,992	427,943	434,016	440,211	453,935	549,469	648,756	752,504	860,656
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	11,487,094	11,784,387	12,088,496	12,399,535	12,752,447	13,214,614	13,679,957	14,149,216	14,622,363
Set aside for debt repayment	-5,218,246	-5,173,436	-5,125,010	-5,072,872	-5,016,924	-4,916,585	-4,818,253	-4,721,888	-4,627,450
Revenue contributions to capital	-5,976,029	-6,312,276	-6,658,837	-7,015,921	-	-	-	-	-
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	292,819	298,675	304,649	310,742	7,735,524	8,298,029	8,861,704	9,427,327	9,994,912
HRA Balance brought forward	14,640,952	14,933,771	15,232,447	15,537,096	15,847,838	23,583,361	31,881,391	40,743,095	50,170,422
HRA surplus/(deficit)	292,819	298,675	304,649	310,742	7,735,524	8,298,029	8,861,704	9,427,327	9,994,912
HRA Balance carried forward	14,933,771	15,232,447	15,537,096	15,847,838	23,583,361	31,881,391	40,743,095	50,170,422	60,165,334
Alert									
Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	-								
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	-								

Repairs & Ma	17%	16,798,638
Management	56%	53,919,144
Bad Debt Pro	1%	616,679
Treasury Mar	2%	2,251,445
Debt Repaym	-37%	-35,626,219
Capital Invest	57%	55,105,859
Surplus	3%	2,969,788
		96,035,334



	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25
Dwelling rents	£66,215,454	£68,403,117	£72,008,662	£74,839,871	£77,451,568
Non-dwelling rents	£4,311,800	£4,434,060	£4,522,741	£4,613,196	£4,705,460
Service charge income	£25,393,080	£25,868,027	£26,314,655	£27,201,681	£28,121,128
Other income and contribution	£115,000	£115,575	£117,887	£120,244	£122,649
Total Income	£96,035,334	£98,820,779	£102,963,945	#####	£110,400,805
Repairs & maintenance	-£16,798,638	-£17,338,813	-£17,833,780	-£18,265,621	-£18,680,647
Management (incl RRT)	-£53,919,144	-£54,782,612	-£54,910,570	-£56,130,071	-£57,353,992
Bad debts	-£616,679	-£608,713	-£598,358	-£600,637	-£621,618
Dwelling Depreciation	-£18,104,000	-£18,379,000	-£18,705,000	-£18,828,000	-£18,839,000
Debt management	-£431,000	-£440,000	-£442,000	-£442,000	-£442,000
Total costs	-£89,869,461	-£91,549,138	-£92,489,708	-£94,266,330	-£95,937,256
Interest payable	-£2,394,667	-£3,496,547	-£4,723,581	-£5,024,095	-£5,010,871
Interest income	£574,222	£446,033	£267,985	£227,322	£137,143
Revenue contributions to capit:	£0	£0	£0	-£17,588,673	-£30,668,583
Opening Balance	£42,810,285	£47,155,713	£51,376,839	£57,395,479	£47,518,695
Surplus / (Deficit)	£4,345,428	£4,221,126	£6,018,640	-£9,876,784	-£21,078,762
Closing Balance	£47,155,713	£51,376,839	£57,395,479	£47,518,695	£26,439,933

Scrutiny Lead for Children and Education Written Update

- Met with vice chair of sub-committee to plan forthcoming meetings and ways of working
- Met with Cabinet Member and Director to set out the reports and attendees needed for sub-committee meeting on 9th Feb
- Reviewed minutes of Schools Forum meeting following helpful input from another scrutiny lead
- Two resident group engagements – one around the closure of a primary school and the other around support for VCS during Covid-19

Bex White

Councillor, Scrutiny Lead for Children and Education

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Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety Written Update –

OSC Meeting 25 January 2020

Activities undergone by Cllr Faroque Ahmed since the last update include:

- Liaising with the Council officers to discuss delays with the Liveable Street Programme that have impacted the intended Challenge Session.
- Preparing for discussions with Council officers regarding possible alternative topics for a challenge session.
- Liaising with Council officers regarding the initial scope for the Domestic Abuse Spotlight Session on 22 March 2021.

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Scrutiny Lead for Health & Adults Written Update –

OSC Meeting 25 January 2020

Health & Adults Scrutiny sub-committee (HASC) will meet on the 8th February. The work programme for 2020/21 has been signed off by the committee. We have two meetings remaining in this municipal year (8 Feb and 2 Apr) and we have a number of important matters to discuss as a result of this pandemic such as revisiting adults learning disabilities provision and looking at the status of care homes and the budget which will be heard at February's meeting.

I have attended the following meetings in my role of Chair:

- Monday 21st December Denise Radley (Corporate Director Health, Adults & Community)
- Friday 8th January Health & Wellbeing Strategy Workshops
- Thursday 14th January COVID 19 Local Engagement Board

Outside of this above I have been in touch with officer and the director regarding the following issues:

- The Royal London Hospital capacity following in December 2020
- The vaccination roll out in Tower Hamlets

Forthcoming meetings:

- Tuesday 2nd February 2021 Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Board. I sit on the board as stakeholder.
- Wednesday 8th February 2021 is the first meeting of the INEL JHOSC since it moved to Hackney Council. Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (INEL JHOSC) comprises of London Boroughs: Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and City of London Corporation. The committee's remit is to consider London wide and local NHS service developments and changes that impact all the authorities mentioned. The INEL JHOSC membership requires three non-executive Councillors from Tower Hamlets to form part of the membership. I attend these meetings. Cllr Mohammed Pappu and Cllr Shah Suhel Ameen were successfully appointed as Tower Hamlets representatives to INEL JHOSC in the last Sub Committee meeting.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 14th December 2020
Councillor Ehtasham Haque- Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration

1. Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meetings 2020/21 held to date

Only one meeting has been held of the H&R Scrutiny Sub-Committee during this financial year (2020/21) - on 3rd November 2020. During this meeting we considered:

- A report on Social Landlords Performance
- The draft report following on from the scrutiny challenge session, (held on 3rd March 2020), on the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) – One Year On and recommendations for the Committee’s approval. *The report was not approved at this meeting – see actions (2).*
- A spotlight presentation by the Housing Options Service on Delivery of the Service: focusing on the Customer journey (in light of Covid-19), an update on the changes to the Allocations Scheme and the introduction of an Intermediate Housing Register of Interest).

2. Actions arising from Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meeting 3rd November

Following discussions after the meeting as to how to progress the scrutiny challenge report on the Homelessness Reduction Act – One year on, it was agreed that the Strategy and Policy (Place) team would circulate the report on my behalf to both current and previous members of the Committee. I have asked them to:

- revisit the report and recommendations. *This offers all Committee Members a further opportunity to comment on its findings, particularly the recommendations.*
- Provide any feedback by **Friday 18th December**. *This will be used to enhance the report.*
- a final version will be circulated to past and present committee members for approval in January 2021 ahead of the next sub-Committee meeting to be held on the 10th February where the report will be ratified, under the AOB heading.

3. The ~Items to be considered at the next meeting on the 10th February 2021:

Item	Actions/Recommendations
Spotlight Comprehensive Regeneration Update	A presentation covering all aspects of the Council’s approach to regeneration, containing an outline of all current regeneration schemes.
Spotlight Leaseholder Service Improvement Plan (THH)	A presentation providing an update on the implementation of actions in the THH Leaseholder Service Improvement Plan following the presentation on service charges to the committee in January 2019.
Spotlight Housing Companies Update	A presentation providing an update on the Council’s two housing companies –Seahorse and Mulberry Homes.
Policy Framework Scrutiny Social Landlords Performance Report	A report on Social Landlords’ performance with One Housing Group invited to attend.
AOB Report from the Scrutiny Challenge Session ‘The Homelessness Reduction Act – One Year On’	Ratification of the report and its recommendations, agreed by Members in January 2021.

4. Other Actions:

In my capacity as Chair of the Sub-Committee, I have met with the Corporate Director of Place and the Place Shaping Team Leader, the Divisional Director for Housing and Regeneration and Senior officers from the Strategy and Policy (Place) team to shape the direction of future Committee meetings and to resolve the ratification of the Homelessness Reduction Act report.

I Plan to have a meeting with the (Acting) Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development to discuss what area we should scrutinise at the subsequent meeting in April 2021.

Finally, I have requested that we hold two short informal meetings (in January and March 2021) to update Sub-Committee members on the progress of scrutiny matters being considered.

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Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance Written Update – OSC Meeting 25 January 2020

Activities undergone by Councillor Leema Qureshi since the last update include:

- Meeting with Kevin Bartle – (Interim Corporate Director, Resources) to understand the budget being put forward including budget setting /monitoring and savings.
- Led discussion on the scoping development for the challenge session for Idea Stores and Library Services on 28.01.2021
- One to one meeting with Candida Ronald on Finance, overspent, balancing the finance and focus areas etc.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 4.02 P.M. ON MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2021

ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)

Members Present:

Councillor James King (Chair)

Councillor Bex White (Vice-Chair)

– Scrutiny Lead for Children & Education

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

– Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety & Environment

Councillor Marc Francis

Councillor Denise Jones

Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan

– Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults

Councillor Leema Qureshi

– Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance

Councillor Andrew Wood

Co-opted Members Present:

Halima Islam

– Co-Optee

James Wilson

– Co-Optee

Officers Present:

Adam Boey

– (Senior Strategy & Policy Manager - Corporate)

Sharon Godman

– (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)

Afazul Hoque

– (Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)

Denise Radley

– (Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)

James Thomas

– (Corporate Director, Children and Culture)

David Knight

– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Nil items

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS

- I. Councillor Marc Francis due to his wife Councillor Rachel Blake being the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing; and
- II. Councillor Bex White due to her father being resident in a Care Home within Tower Hamlets.

3. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil Items

4. REPORT/PRESENTATION FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Review of the changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Committee received and commented on the review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy the Committee (**Attached** as an appendix to these minutes) has been working on an appraisal of the budget proposals from the from the Executive that were published with the papers for the Committees meeting on the 25th of January 2021. The main points of the discussion on the review of the changes to the MTFS may be summarised as follows:

The Committee:

- ❖ **Noted** that this meeting had been convened considering the new elements for the Council's Budget Capital Programme, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and other changes to proposed savings that were considered at the Cabinet meeting on 27th January 2021.
- ❖ **Commented** that more information was needed regarding any overspends in the HRA projects that were referenced to in the papers published as part of the Cabinet agenda for the 27th of January 2021.
- ❖ **Noted** that in the report to Cabinet on 27th January 2021 reference had been made about a report by Savills on the borrowing and investment capacity within the HRA, and Members wanted to know when a copy of that report will be circulated as they wished to know if the additional 1,000 new homes could be delivered **e.g.** to have confirmation which projects would be carried out by which Housing Company.
- ❖ **Expressed** concerns around the asset transfer of land or buildings which the Authority owns and what that would mean if the Council were to look at different vehicles for delivering this programme and the sustainability implications of such different approaches.
- ❖ **Noted** that whilst this is a really challenging budget the report identifies what needs to happen to make this a better budget and that decisions made are necessary.
- ❖ **Questioned** why cutting services (£13.5M savings proposals for 2021-22) to allow for topping up of reserves (e.g. £7M New Homes Bonus) when reserves are sufficient.

- ❖ **Noted** proposal to: Provide further poverty relief by making up to £100K available (one-off for 2021-22) to foodbanks who are under financial pressures in meeting community needs; and expand the Resident Support Grant to £150K (one-off for 2021-22) for vulnerable people to access – funded from additional £7million New Homes Bonus which is earmarked for reserves.
- ❖ **Commented** that after a year in which local authority savings plans have been squeezed and income reduced, funding gaps in many areas for councils are considerable.
- ❖ **Commented** that there is no real certainty over when income streams will start to pick up again and that demand for services will continue to be high with many households hit with reduced income or even unemployment over the past year.
- ❖ **Commented** that whilst the Government seems to be anticipating councils to put up taxes and the proposal to Council tax recommends an increase of 4.99% the Local government Chronicle reported last week that looking at a percentage of councils across England that 47% have chosen not to impose the maximum increase. Therefore, councils do have a choice and that point should be made clear in the report.
- ❖ **Commented** that whilst recognising that councils are under “no obligation” to make substantial council tax increases it would be useful to know if data includes other London councils as they tend to have lower value tax bases and so even maximum increases will often not raise as much as smaller increase in the shires. As a metropolitan areas tax base of largely band A and band B flats generates less income than one with a larger share of detached properties in suburban or rural areas.
- ❖ **Commented** it is incredibly difficult to be make such decisions right now and therefore the Committee should look at the Budget again in the early summer when more information has become available (i) fuller details on the impact that Covid has had on the Council’s finances; and (ii) what the additional funding that Government may have provided at that time.
- ❖ **Commented** that calculations will obviously differ between councils, depending on the type and scale of cuts they will be forced to consider or whether they can plug the gap with reserves for a year.
- ❖ **Commented** that whilst the Council would have to make deeper cuts if they do not avail themselves of the maximum rise the reductions in services will most likely cut through local communities to a greater extent than any increases in council tax bills.
- ❖ **Agreed** on the need to understand the impact of the budget proposals on residents including vulnerable people such as refugees, disability, rough sleepers, mental health, older persons, children, and young people.
- ❖ **Expressed** concern about the proposals to raise fees and charges, and savings, in such unprecedented times for local communities.
- ❖ **Wanted** to see indicators, methodologies, and tools to allow the Council to demonstrate value and justify its decisions to the communities they seek to serve.

- ❖ **Wanted** to see the impact of the savings from 2019-2020 especially with reference to the Community Language Service (CLS).
- ❖ **Noted** that whilst it had been agreed that LBTH could no longer fully fund the CLS, it was a service that was really valued, and the Council wanted to retain this Service in the Borough. Therefore, LBTH wanted to invest in the future sustainability of the service but this had proved difficult because of Covid which means that it is in effect and unachieved saving from 2019-2021.
- ❖ **Agreed** that given the continuing pandemic conditions, scrutiny would like to see evidence that decisions made last year to reduce funding services and be more self-sustaining under normal circumstances, are now no longer viable, and needs reviewing including mitigation approaches.
- ❖ **Agreed** that it was important to look at such unmet savings **e.g.** to have a breakdown of certain parts of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure and income regarding LBTH's housing stock and closely related services or facilities.
- ❖ **Agreed** that they needed more detail on assumptions, actuals (past quarters'/years' budget headline numbers) and risks (HRA project breakdown and consultants' reports, including Savills reports, and reviews) to provide better context for budget proposals; this included service/function budgets (**i.e.** more resolution than which directorate) so that multiple impacts within portfolios can be better viewed and cumulative impacts to resident and communities can be evaluated.
- ❖ **Commented** that LBTH should produce strategies for commercialisation and income generation to ensure that they have identified all opportunities for income generation and have plans as to how to bring these into effect. **e.g.** it should identify and analyse any risks associated with such strategies and state how LBTH will address these.
- ❖ **Noted** that a report had been presented to Council on 28 October 2020 regarding substantial changes to the Ideas Stores and Library Service due to the increased financial challenge faced by Tower Hamlets and queried if the time is right for such substantial changes.
- ❖ **Agreed** that that Cabinet should therefore consider the recommendations arising from a scrutiny challenge session on Revised Approach for IDEA Stores and Library Service held on 28 January 2021.

4.2 2021-2022 Budget Proposals

As a result of a full and wide-ranging discussion on the appraisal of the budget proposals.

The Chair Moved and it was: -

RESOLVED to:

1. **Thank** all those attendees for their contributions to the discussions on the changes to the MTFS; and

2. **Agreed** the changes to the review as detailed in the **attached** Budget Scrutiny and Budget Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions and responses.

5. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

Nil items

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

As the agenda circulated contained no exempt/ confidential reports and there was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public to allow for its consideration.

7. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil items

The meeting ended at 4.59 p.m.

**Chair, Councillor James King
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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OSC Budget Scrutiny

February 2021

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Foreword

The past year has been an unprecedented tragedy. For councils like Tower Hamlets to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to keep services running as appropriate is testament to the continued resilience of local government and local communities after a decade of reduction in government grants.

The Committee recognises that in this context, setting a local budget has been extremely difficult. Uncertainty of what will unfold in the next 12 months has carried over into the government's planning and response, which has tested local authorities.

We commend the Mayor, his Cabinet and officers for the work which has gone into achieving a balanced budget and the placing of the council in a relatively firm financial position.

I thank my scrutiny colleagues for their participation and efforts in their review of the Budget, and thank Mayor John Biggs, and Cllrs Candida Ronald, Danny Hassell and Rachel Blake for engaging with scrutiny in attending the January budget scrutiny session, and for being generally helpful and open providing information and answering questions, often in detail.

The Committee have reflected on the budget making process, the overall outlook and direction the budget takes and how individual proposals shape that.

This year the Committee has particularly felt that the proposals are fiscally conservative – to the point where savings (and reduction of services) have to be made in order to maintain levels of reserves during this dire period.

The Committee feels that using reserves now is as prudent during the COVID-19 pandemic as it will be in the long term aftermath of the pandemic.

The Committee has also tried to interrogate how proposals might affect a recovery from COVID-19 in the future. The council needs to demonstrate how its budget and strategic direction is geared towards the pandemic and its effects.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James King'. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'J' and 'K'.

Councillor James King

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair

Summary Recommendations

Funding and Reserves

Recommendation 1 - Establish a funding approach that includes a refreshed Reserves' Policy – so that it doesn't operate in isolation, and is integrated; attach confidence levels/levels of assurance against items and aspects projected to happen, and reflect on past projections to learn from those things we have previously predicted/assumed that have not eventuated.

Recommendation 1A: Revisit the estimates of the New Homes Bonus.

Recommendation 1B: Scrutiny to review the council's approach to commercialisation and income generation.

Fees and Charges

Recommendation 2 - Review approach to comparing increases (i.e. percentage vs absolute - £/p); establish a method to understand impact on affected residents and communities for this annual process BEFORE making decisions, or even proposing changes.

COVID-19 impacts

Recommendation 3 - Looking beyond the council's response, and into recovery – ensuring infrastructure, services and staff are planning to support communities and residents in dealing with the expected economic shock which will last for months/years.

Recommendation 3A: Provide further poverty relief by making up to £100k available (one-off for 2021-22) to foodbanks who are under financial pressures in meeting community needs; and expand the Resident Support Grant to £150k (one-off for 2021-22) for vulnerable people to access – funded from additional £7million New Homes Bonus which is earmarked for reserves.

Recommendation 3B: Given the continuing pandemic conditions, scrutiny would like to see evidence that decisions made last year to reduce funding services and be more self-sustaining under normal circumstances, are now no longer viable, and needs reviewing including mitigation approaches.

Budget information

Recommendation 4: Include more detail on assumptions, actuals (past quarters'/years' budget headline numbers) and risks (HRA project breakdown and consultants' reports, including Savills reports, and reviews) to provide better context for budget proposals; this includes service/function budgets (i.e. more resolution than directorate) so that multiple impacts within portfolios can be better viewed and cumulative impacts to resident and communities can be evaluated.

Recommendation 4A: Progress the minimal, essential elements of budget setting now, but delay major decisions until more information is available to better understand impacts and respond in the summer.

Council Tax Support

Recommendation 5: Improve Council Tax Support offer for self-employed residents

Risk Management

Recommendation 6 - Scrutiny should be sighted on the risk management approach that is to be tabled (Treasury Management Strategy) at Audit Committee – the TMS is fundamental to the annual budget approach and setting the MTFS.

Social Care Grant

Recommendation 7 - Use the Social Care Grant to delay the implementation of key savings proposals.

Savings

Recommendation 8: The Committee asks that Cabinet consider the recommendations arising from a scrutiny challenge session on a Revised Approach for IDEA Stores and Library Service held on 28 January.

Recommendations raised in previous years (still applicable):

- Start the Budget setting process earlier.
- That the Annual Budget and MTFS reflects the council's priorities, specifically matching spend, funding and savings to Strategic Plan and Borough Plan priorities and outcomes – including assessment of beneficial and adverse impacts at the proposal stage.

1. Recommendations

Funding and Reserves

Recommendation 1: Establish a funding approach that includes a refreshed Reserves' Policy – so that it doesn't operate in isolation, and is integrated; attach confidence levels/levels of assurance against items and aspects projected to happen, and reflect on past projections to learn from those things we have previously predicted/assumed that have not eventuated.

- 1.1. The Committee queried cutting services (£13.5m savings proposals for 2021-22) to allow for topping up of reserves (e.g. £7m New Homes Bonus) when the Committee considers that reserves are sufficient.
- 1.2. Further, the Committee suggested that such a situation arises from an under-estimation of projected income, which has happened in previous years, which then needs to be offset by increased savings (reduction in services). The problem highlighted is that actual income increased, negating the need for savings/service cuts – but these have then been already made, perhaps with long-term impact (given increasing service demand in some areas).
- 1.3. Of particular concern to the Committee for any changes to services and support proposed (saving proposals) is the ability of the following services to continue to meet existing demand, and be flexible to rise to meet increasing demand in the short to medium term:
 - Support for Learning Service - decision/details pending
 - Libraries - £600k
 - Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services - £552k
 - Children with Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) – decision/details pending
- 1.4. In order to increase confidence, a fundamental review of the performance of projections/modelling of income must occur.
- 1.5. The Committee considered that the funding approach isn't integrated: there is not a clear relationship between the reserves policy and new and additional government grants over years.
- 1.6. The establishment, monitoring and review of the levels of reserves and balances are an important element of the council's financial management approach. While reserves are an important mechanism for setting aside sums for future use, they are also an opportunity to mitigate against unexpected or unprecedented events. The Committee feels that the current Reserves Policy makes no explicit provision for emergencies or unexpected events, not even in a strategic context.
- 1.7. The Committee considered that given the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually, it could be made clearer that reserves' balances (general fund, HRA, earmarked) could be listed along with targets or projections for the

MTFS period. Some local authorities go further, providing a breakdown of key line items (e.g. earmarked, capital reserve items) with purpose and projected timings for use.

Recommendation 1A: Revisit the estimates of the New Homes Bonus

- 1.8. The Committee notes the government's intention to replace the New Homes Bonus (NHB) grant scheme with one that rewards those local authorities that facilitate the development of new housing.
- 1.9. However, members have consistently questioned the original estimate of income from over the next three years - £10m in 2021/22, £3.8m in 2022/23 and nil in 2023/24. The sum actually provided by the government for NHB in 2021/22 stands at £17m.
- 1.10. While it is acknowledged that this total was only announced at the beginning of December, this £7m additional funding simply being applied to top-up existing reserves. Additionally, this under-estimate of NHB funding for next year hasn't led to any revision to the estimates for 2022/23 and 2023/24. In the Committee's view these very conservative estimates are one of the main drivers of the projected deficits in those years and the assumed need for further savings and increased fees and charges.
- 1.11. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector and Divisional Director of Finance urgently revisit these estimates. The council should explore whether those other London Boroughs that are significant beneficiaries of NHB are also assuming they will receive a fifth of the 2021/22 funding in 2022/23 and nothing at all in 2023/24, and report back on this to the Mayor and Cabinet.
- 1.12. We also urge the Mayor and Lead Member to reflect upon the appropriateness of the proposal to simply place this in reserves instead of using it to ease the financial burden on residents struggling financially during the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic.

Recommendation 1B: Scrutiny to review the council's approach to commercialisation and income generation.

- 1.13. In further discussions, the Committee reflected that more could be done in income generation, and that the Budget paper does identify this opportunity: 'Income generation opportunities including through a more commercial approach'. Scrutiny has not yet seen the detail of this commercial approach.

Fees and Charges

Recommendation 2: Review approach to comparing increases (i.e. percentage vs absolute - £/p); establish a method to understand impact on affected residents and communities for this annual process BEFORE making decisions, or even proposing changes.

- 1.14. The Committee considered that increases for resident parking permits (up to 135% increase) and market traders (up to 263% increase) are significant and inconsistent – with little empirical justification for the specific increases proposed.
- 1.15. The Committee noted that proposed increases to fees and charges are predicated on the level of inflation (CPI as a key factor), then service demand, projected cost of services, benchmarking with other local authorities and impact of economic factors, including COVID-19, on the council's residents. However, the Committee suggested there needs to be much greater clarity for justifying increases above CPI.
- 1.16. The Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector reflected that evaluation of fees and charges based on percentage increases alone does not provide a well-rounded view. The Committee agrees, and challenges the Cabinet Member and her services to develop a better method in determining increases in the first instance, and then presenting them clearly in a public report so that residents and communities can understand the logic in proposed specific increases. Where the justification is to balance fees and charges income against the costs of providing a service, e.g. street markets, then more information needs to be supplied as to the actual income and costs of each service so that the increase in charges can be more easily understood.
- 1.17. The Committee continues to be concerned about our understanding of impacts on individuals (particularly those with protected characteristics) and communities, and doesn't feel that sufficient impact assessment is being done to enable evidence-based decision-making.
- 1.18. As the Committee has said previously, there are several models that can be used to quantify and measure impact. The Centre for Public Scrutiny recommends the 'Nesta' model for instance.
- 1.19. In further discussions, the Committee continues to be concerned about raising fees and charges, and proposing savings, in such unprecedented times for communities. Putting impact measurement systems in place will allow the council to demonstrate value and justify its decisions to the public.

COVID-19 recovery

Recommendation 3: Looking beyond the council's response, and into recovery – ensuring infrastructure, services and staff are planning to support communities and residents in dealing with the expected economic shock which will last for months/years.

- 1.20. The Budget paper recognises the COVID-19 dimension to the council's activities in 2020 and the cost of our COVID-19 response – referencing some items such as the rise in cost to Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme of £5m, and how the pandemic has impacted the business rates income – a £10.2m deficit.

- 1.21. The Committee considered that a further view is needed, for medium term impacts on residents and communities as they manage economic shock which are still unfolding – and services and infrastructure need to be planning for the next economic shock, particularly once furloughs and payment holidays end.

Recommendation 3A: Provide further poverty relief by making up to £100k available (one-off for 2021-22) to foodbanks who are under financial pressures in meeting community needs; and expand the Resident Support Grant to £150k (one-off for 2021-22) for vulnerable people to access – funded from additional £7m New Homes Bonus which is earmarked for reserves.

- 1.22. Further, the Committee considers that given the continued and, in many cases, amplified tragedies in Tower Hamlets, there is responsibility for the council to respond accordingly and provide poverty relief in recognition and response to current hardship.
- 1.23. The Committee suggests £100k is made available to foodbanks in recognition that they are under financial pressure to continue to provide support to those in need of food; and an expanded sum of £150k is available for the Resident Support payments programme again recognising that there are people in dire need of support – and that both should be funded from the £7m New Homes Bonus proposed to be put into reserves.

Recommendation 3B: Given the continuing pandemic conditions, scrutiny would like to see evidence that decisions made last year to reduce funding services and be more self-sustaining under normal circumstances, are now no longer viable, and need reviewing including mitigation approaches.

- 1.24. The Committee discussed whether the council understands the impacts of previous reductions to services in the context of new proposed changes and COVID-19, and how the resilience of communities is now reduced. For example, last year's decision that the Community Learning Service should operate more sustainably, is now not possible in pandemic conditions.
- 1.25. The Committee reflected that unmet savings from previous years continue to impact the current budget, and along with the pandemic severely impacting communities, there needs to be more focus and recognition of these aspects to the council's approach.

Budget information

Recommendation 4: Include more detail on assumptions, actuals (past quarters'/years' budget headline numbers) and risks (HRA project breakdown and consultants' reports and reviews) to provide better context for budget proposals; this includes service/function budgets (i.e. more resolution than directorate) so that multiple impacts within portfolios can be better viewed and cumulative impacts to resident and communities can be evaluated.

- 1.26. The budget presented to Cabinet on 6 January was without HRA, capital programme details and assets proposals. In future years, the budget papers

should be presented to the Committee as a complete draft budget prior to the scrutiny meeting so that the budget proposals can be holistically scrutinised.

- 1.27. No actual historical information has been provided for comparison purposes (as even 2020/21 is based on that year's budget). When asked why, the response was that the departmental structure had changed making year on year comparison difficult. But this ignores three points:
1. Income can still be compared with previous years - it is only the departmental cost structure that changed
 2. Costs can be broken down in other ways e.g. total staff costs, total utilities, etc, to allow year on year comparison in other ways
 3. It should be possible to isolate those functions which moved departments in both actuals and budget to allow comparisons at a more detailed level and not all departments changed structure
- 1.28. We should have at least the last two years of actual income and costs 2019/20 and 2018/19 as a comparison (as 2020/21 will be such a strange year it might make sense to only include the original budget for this year).
- 1.29. In further discussions by the Committee, it is felt that more information is needed regarding a budget breakdown of HRA projects – with clarity sought about the phase 2 infill – there is substantial risk identified in Cabinet's September 2020 Capital Programme report.
- 1.30. Also, Savills reports are mentioned throughout but their findings are not presented regarding the 1k new homes. For transparency it is important to understand which projects are delivered by which housing companies. Finally, regarding asset transfer, there is a need to understand what risk there is for specific projects and what this means for different vehicles, and the impact on 30 year plan.

Recommendation 4A: Progress the minimal, essential elements of budget setting now, but delay major decisions until more information is available to better understand impacts and respond in the summer.

- 1.31. The Committee reflected that even at the national level there are difficulties in setting a budget during such a volatile environment impacted by the pandemic, with the Chancellor delaying the Spending Review until the summer. At this point we will be better placed to understand budget allocation for local government.

Council Tax Reduction scheme

Recommendation 5: Improve Council Tax Support offer for self-employed residents

- 1.32. The Committee discussed with the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector at the outset of the pandemic about the impact of the

lockdown on their income after the Chancellor had announced a £500m Council Tax Hardship Fund in his March Budget. Members noted that the government had suspended its use of the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) to determine entitlement to Universal Credit. It was understood that self-employed residents would be similarly helped through the council's own Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

- 1.33. However, claimants have been required to apply under the Section 13A relief from Council Tax provisions, which require a very strict and intrusive assessment of their expenditure as well as their income.
- 1.34. The Committee considered that the extra £4.2m provided was insufficient to cover the extra costs incurred by the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme given an estimated extra 3000 claimants; and that there is insufficient financial support for self-employed residents at this time of financial crisis.
- 1.35. The Committee suggests that the council needs to have a better understanding of the number of self-employed CTS claimants who have benefitted from becoming entitled to CTS or via the section 13A relief route, and what last year's £4.2m Hardship Fund was used for.

Risk Management

Recommendation 6: Scrutiny should be sighted on the risk management approach that is to be tabled (Treasury Management Strategy) at Audit Committee – the TMS is fundamental to the annual budget approach and setting the MTFS.

- 1.36. The global economy has shifted significantly in 2020 and it would be expected that changes continue to unfold in 2021 and beyond. Therefore, details around borrowing and investment performance for 2020 and projections into next year are of particular interest.
- 1.37. The Committee reflected that in order to scrutinise the council's complete financial position, review of the proposed Treasury Management Strategy is essential.
- 1.38. Further, the Committee requested further details around the HRA and capital programme and noted that the changes between the 23 September, 6 January and 27 January Cabinet meetings needed further consideration. There was concern expressed at the lack of the detail within the proposals regarding the council's housing vehicles, specifically in respect of risk modelling. A further report on the progress of the vehicles and their impact should be submitted to the Committee.

Social Care Grant

Recommendation 7: Use the Social Care Grant to delay the implementation of key savings proposals

- 1.39. The sum of £2.9m provided as Social Care Grant over and above the £9m originally expected – making a total of £12.3m in 2021. The Committee

agrees that this sum will not fill the deficit in Adults Services budgets caused by demographic pressures and cannot therefore be a substitute for utilising the maximum 3% Adult Social Care Precept recommended by the Chancellor.

- 1.40. However, the Committee could not clearly reference £2.9m in 2022/23 and 2023/24. This needs to be included to more accurately represents funding in the MTFs. Like the New Homes Bonus Grant, the Committee considers this is overly-conservative, given past experience with the SCG and the Better Care Fund, and more accurately presenting income/funding.
- 1.41. The Committee asks the Cabinet to use part of this additional sum to delay the implementation of any changes to those services (i.e. new savings proposals for 2021-22) with impacts on service users, particularly vulnerable people.
- 1.42. The Committee suggests a delay should apply to the following proposals:
 - Early Years' Service
 - Education and Partnerships Service
 - Day Opportunities
 - Substance Misuse services
- 1.43. A moratorium or delay would better allow council to understand impacts on residents, and allow time for a redesign of services to meet needs and provide best support to those who need it most.
- 1.44. On 8 February 2021, the Health and Adult Scrutiny Sub-Committee raised questions regarding Grant Thornton's recommendation around 2021/2022 budget savings proposals and at the time of this report the Committee were awaiting an update. The Committee noted that in future, the schedule for budget scrutiny should take into consideration the timing of sub-committee meetings, so that recommendations can align with the Committee's budget recommendations.

Savings

Recommendation 8: The Committee asks that Cabinet consider the recommendations arising from a scrutiny challenge session on Revised Approach for IDEA Stores and Library Service held on 28 January

- 1.45. The Committee questioned whether the time is right for such a substantial change to library services, as was proposed in the public consultation ending 29 January.
- 1.46. The Committee has already drafted recommendations as a result of the scrutiny challenge session held on 28 January.

Other recommendations – raised in previous years:

A. Start the Budget setting process earlier

1.47. The Committee believes that the public consultation process should begin earlier to allow for a longer lead time to consider and reflect consultation feedback from local residents, members, partners and businesses.

B. That the Annual Budget and MTFS reflects the council's priorities, specifically matching spend, funding and savings to Strategic Plan and Borough Plan priorities and outcomes – including assessment of beneficial and adverse impacts at the proposal stage

1.48. The Committee's responsibility in scrutinising the budget includes questioning how the proposed spending plans fit with the council's overall aims, objectives and priorities. Current budget proposals do not go beyond referring to the Strategic Plan in the introduction, and do not link the budget approach (for all elements such as funding, reserves, savings) for 2021-22 to the delivery of LBTH priorities and outcomes.

2. Approach to Budget Scrutiny

- 2.1. Budget scrutiny is aligned to the council's annual budget process, which starts with challenging how the budget has been constructed (i.e. during budget setting) before it is agreed.
- 2.2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertakes quarterly monitoring of the budget and engages regularly with the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector as a key component of its work programme.
- 2.3. The Scrutiny Lead for Resources engages the Resources Directorate to understand and query the budget setting processes and relevant budget policies.
- 2.4. In setting the budget for the upcoming 2021-22 financial year, the Committee was asked to provide their budget scrutiny report earlier than usual: before Cabinet's consideration of the final draft budget on 27 January, and submission to Full Council on 24 February.
- 2.5. Recommendations in this report are based on the Committee's discussions at the Budget Scrutiny meeting held on 11 January, where Scrutiny Members reviewed proposed Fees and Charges for 2021-22, the 2021-22 Budget position (particularly funding, savings and reserves) and the longer term MTFs over the next three years.

Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions – Cabinet 6 January and 27 January 2021

- 2.6. The Committee looks at decisions before they are made by Cabinet. This is an important opportunity to challenge assumptions, consider what risks might arise from decisions, and influence decisions. Scrutiny members bring a different perspective to the decision-making process than that provided by Cabinet members or officers, which can help decisions to be more robust.
- 2.7. Ahead of the draft budget considered by Cabinet on 6 January and the revised Budget papers on 27 January, the Committee tabled a number of pre-decision scrutiny questions. These and their answers can be found at Appendix 1.

OSC Budget Briefing

- 2.8. On 7 January 2021, the Committee received a briefing from the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, Cllr Ronald and officers on business rates, COVID-funding and gaps, and Council Tax support.

- 2.9. The Committee heard how the Business Rates Retention Scheme works, and the impact of a reset on the baseline funding level, tariff to be paid back to the government, and the Council's budget.
- 2.10. The Committee was also briefed on how business rates are calculated and the challenges and variation in this funding stream which makes budget forecasting difficult. The impact of the pandemic on collection rates and net collectable debit was also highlighted.
- 2.11. Lastly, the Committee heard about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and about the overall costs of the scheme, over MTF5 years, and the mechanisms for determining eligibility for residents.

OSC Budget Scrutiny Sessions

- 2.12. On 11 January 2021, the Committee held its budget scrutiny session with time spent discussing:
 - Fees and Charges proposed for 2021-22
 - Budget proposals, including the MTF5
 - Focus on two areas given their impact on the budget: Health, Adults and Community; and Children and Culture
- 2.13. Further details of these discussions and key issues can be found in the minutes of the meeting on the council website [here](#).
- 2.14. On 1 February, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held a follow-up budget scrutiny session to review Cabinet's 27 January amendments to the council's 2021-22 Budget Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-24, with a particular focus on the capital programme and new section on Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.15. Further details of these discussions and key issues can be found in the minutes of the meeting on the council website [here](#).

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Appendix 1. Budget Pre-decision Scrutiny Questions and responses

Cabinet – 6 January 2021

Item 6.3 Fees and Charges 2021-22	
Questions	Response
Q1 With rounding up, to the nearest 5p/10p etc many items costs are increasing faster than inflation - what is the overall % increase expected for each area or the average increase for each area based on expected demand?	Average percentage increases per directorate are Children & Culture (2.2%), Governance (0.9%), Health, Adults & Community (7.2%), Place (11.0%) and Resources (11.2%).

Item 6.4 Calculation of Council Tax Base 2021-22	
Questions	Response
Q1 13 Council Tax Support Estimate = £22,457 but on page 26 of main section it says, "cost of the scheme has risen from £26.7m in 2019-20 to circa £31.8m in 2020-21." which number is correct as this seems to low?	The 22,457 figure is the estimated number of Council Tax Support Band D equivalent properties (not an amount of money).

Item 6.2 The Council's 2021-22 Budget Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-24	
Questions	Response
Q1 The report does not make clear the impact of the large COVID deficit in 2020/21 that the Council has repeatedly advertised e.g. in its press release of 5th August 2020. See points made in 3.5.45. Why not? will the budget be updated once this is available?	The government has provided further funding since August 2020, including contributing towards the 2020-21 Collection Fund deficit for Business Rates and Council Tax, however, there remains considerable uncertainty around the pandemic with potential further waves of the virus. Some Covid extra costs and reduced income such as fees and charges are, in the main, short-term pressures which would call on reserves in year (if not funded fully by government or mitigated). The Covid effect on the 2020-21 Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund deficit impacts the Council over 2021-24 and this has been accounted for in the Council Tax and Business Rates income for these years in the MTFS, as well as the medium term impact of Covid on previous assumptions around collection rates, tax base growth, exemptions/discounts and rating changes.
Q2 Can the Council provide a summary of where it has made a worst-case funding assumption? e.g. New Homes Bonus ending but with no change to other grants programmes	The Council uses mid-case (prudent) estimates, including cross-checking against independent analyses of funding assumptions.
Q3 The MTFS data in the 1st column for 2020/21 of Appendix 2 does this exclude the direct impact of COVID on costs and funding? if yes, see question 1	Yes. The new 2021-24 three years budget is built from the starting point of the previously agreed 2020-21 budget.
Q7 Business rates - can we have a breakdown of the assumptions behind the fall in business rates income?	The MTFS estimates a 6% reduction in 2021-22 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The MTFS also estimates the Council share of the 2020-21 deficit to be £10.2m (which gives £0.85m per annum to be repaid over the three years 2021-24, being 25% after the government provides funding for 75% of the deficit). The MTFS also estimates that the business rates reset will increase the tariff from £6.0m in 2021-22 to £20.6m in 2022-23 (and therefore decreases retained income in 2022-23 and ongoing).

Further questions asked, and responses received after Cabinet on 6 January 2021:

<p>Q7 Why is the cost of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme not shown (or presented as a reduction in funding) given how large the number have now become? can these be added to the MTFs summary as a sub-total.</p>	<p>The Council Tax Collection Fund is affected by a combination of multiple factors including the council tax base (the number of properties adjusted for exemptions and discounts), the rate of charge per property and the collection rate. Therefore, the LCTRS as well as the other factors are all included in the modelling to estimate the Council Tax Collection Fund income figure.</p>
<p>Q8 The "Core spending power" analysis published by MHCLG on the 17th December 2020 suggests a 12% increase in funding available to LBTH in 2021/22 compared to 2015/16 (inflation has also been about 12% in that period suggesting funding has remained flat once inflation is included & a per capita decrease). Does LBTH agree with this?</p>	<p>The Core Spending Power (CSP) calculation by government includes an assumption that councils will increase council tax by the maximum levels allowed by government before requiring local referendums, increasing taxation at a local level to replace funding previously funded by central government.</p> <p>The CSP does not reflect the changes to Settlement Funding Assessment made for authorities with increased Business Rates Retention arrangements.</p> <p>The CSP calculation includes the allocation of some short-term grant funding and excludes other service specific grants, which also reduces the accuracy of using CSP to demonstrate overall funding comparisons between years.</p> <p>A flat level of funding (or per capita decrease) would signify that funding has not kept pace with increasing levels of need and complexity of need such as for adult social care.</p>
<p>Q9 Please correct the error in 3.5.26 p29, TH has every year received the highest NHB in the country not one of the highest</p>	<p>In the final 2019-20 allocations, the Year 9 payment to Newham was £4.215m and Tower Hamlets was £3.812m. Therefore, excluding legacy payments, Tower Hamlets does not always receive the highest allocation in any one year.</p>
<p>Q1. Has the public health grant been considered as a funding option for the Key Stage Two extension of Free School Meals? If so, is it included in the review options going to the 27th January Cabinet meeting?</p>	<p>Yes, the Public Health Grant has been considered and will continue to provide a significant contribution towards ensuring Free School Meals for all our primary school pupils. In addition (at 3.5.30 in the Cabinet Report) it is being recommended that the New Homes Bonus reserve is utilised to fund the Key Stage Two extension of Free School Meals until the end of 2023-24 at an estimated cost of £2m per annum (in addition to the £1m per annum funding from the Public Health grant).</p>
<p>Q2. How has the Disabled Facilities Grants and Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund been incorporated in the MTF?</p>	<p>These funds are both for capital spend. The Council's capital programme takes account of the Disabled Facilities Grant. The Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund has been managed for London by the Greater London Authority (GLA).</p>
<p>Q3. Section 3.5.37 - 0-5 Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) - in contract efficiency saving: could you outline what would be</p>	<p>We have discussed this with the provider and the saving will be made primarily through savings from estates efficiencies (e.g. exploring colocation with Children's Centres). This will be a recurrent saving.</p>

<p>included in the contract efficiency saving and why this is considered a one-off cost for 20/21 only.</p>	
<p>Q4. Section 3.5.43 Covid-19 Support Grants - What is the forecasted overspend broken down over the below identified areas of the non-ring fenced Covid-19 emergency grant and could the public health grant be earmarked to include the shortfall forecasted? Non-ringfenced Covid-19 emergency grant (£38.1m); Test, Track and Contain Grants (£3.6m); Contain Outbreak Management Fund (£2.7m); Council Tax Hardship Fund (£4.4m); Next Steps Accommodation Programmes (3.3m); Infection Control (£2.0m for care homes support)</p>	<p>The Covid-19 pandemic situation is still changing and therefore the full impact of costs and reduced income are not known at this time, and further new tranches of funding may be announced. MHCLG collects national information on costs and reduced income from local authorities and it is hoped that the government will fully recompense local authorities for the financial impact of Covid-19. The non-ringfenced Covid-19 emergency grant is expected to be fully allocated, as are the Test, Track and Contain Grants, Contain Outbreak Management Fund and Infection Control. The Council Tax Hardship Fund is insufficient to meet the increased cost of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) (which has risen from £26.7m in 2019-20 to an estimated £31.8m in 2020-21). The LCTRS costs are taken account of as part of the Council Tax Collection Fund income assumptions for 2021-24 in the MTFS. Next Steps Accommodation – additional Covid related rough sleepers spend of £3.4m is forecast. This fully utilises the £820k Next Steps Accommodation Programme (Short Term) grant and the £13k Rough Sleepers Grant. The remaining £2.6m pressure would need to be funded through the non-ringfenced emergency grant and/or an amount of the £2.5m Next Steps Accommodation Programme (Long Term) grant (which is intended for costs incurred from 2020-21 to 2023-24).</p>
<p>Q5 - What are the risks of Capital borrowing - £0.109m (21-22) and £1.271m (22-23) to fund an increase in borrowing costs to support the capital programme? And in the 27th January cabinet meeting will detail of the risk mitigation be included in the report?</p>	<p>There is a risk related to borrowing costs not being met. This risk is mitigated through the fact the council has built in necessary budgets relating to borrowing costs within medium term financial plans. There is also a risk related to timing of borrowing which could impact the associated interest rates of borrowing. This risk is mitigated through plans within the treasury management strategy.</p>
<p>Q6 - Section 3.10.09 - Please could a copy of the "long term recovery plan for high needs" which you state "has been reviewed and accepted by the Department for Education" be circulated with the budget note to cabinet?</p>	<p>Previously sent to OSC members 22 January 2021</p>

Q7 - As part of the budget note to cabinet could the EIA for the SAV / HAC 004 / 21-22, Integrated Commissioning Staffing Reductions be circulated?	The integrated commissioning staffing reductions have already been made and were delivered through a combination of vacant posts and voluntary redundancies. The EIA is attached.
Q8 - Regarding saving SAV / CHI 009 / 21-22 and SAV / CHI 010 / 21-22: has the risk that redistributing this funding may impact on the DSG and that the Schools Forum may therefore choose to review the services, been factored into the redistribution of saving? Could you outline in the services which are being redistribution to the DSG? What is the threshold for an EIA to be considered for savings such as these?	The services that are included are services that the LA has a statutory duty to provide primarily funded through the central block of the DSG. They are not discretionary services and therefore we would not expect the Schools Forum to be in a position to review the service and not make the saving however at the same time we want to ensure a clear and transparent relationship with Schools so both sides are clear on what the appropriate duties and funding are. There appears to have been an expectation from schools historically that a statutory provision should be met from general fund when that would not be the case for the majority of school related costs.
Q9. Section 3.10.14 regarding the latest DSG allocation over the funding blocks for 2021-22. What was the reason for including the previously separately funded teacher's pay and pensions grants of £9.793 m?	The Department for Education have rolled the previously separately funded grants into the DSG baseline so on initial review it looks like a larger DSG increase than is actually the case. The information has been presented in this may to illustrate the actual overall cash increase.
Q10. Why is the cabinet being asked to agree the budget note on the Housing revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting Summary while the three-year Capital Programme 2021-24 will be included in the MTFS Cabinet report on 27 January 2021?	HRA rental income funds revenue expenditure (as well as the borrowing cost of capital expenditure) and forms an integral part of the HRA budget and business plan (and therefore earlier agreement of the inflationary increase is good practice to allow the finalisation of the HRA budget).
Q11. What are the "key aspirations" which require a Capital Programme additional Council borrowing (revenue cost) of £0.1m (21-22) and £1.3m (22-23) so that a growth budget has been included in the MTFS to fund borrowing costs.	The increased borrowing requirement has resulted from the council's commitment to deliver a new school for George Green on its existing site and the need to fund an annual rolling programme to ensure that the council's assets are maintained to avoid deterioration, to address ongoing health and safety requirements and meet statutory duties.
Q12. The LGA has stated "that the Government should match the growth in public health grant to growth in overall NHS funding under the Long-Term Plan. This means the public health grant would have to increase to at least £3.9 billion by	The MTFS estimates that the PH grant will increase from £35.4m (2021-22) to £35.9m (2022-23) and to £36.6m (2023-24). The 2021-22 allocation for the Council has not been confirmed to date and Public Health would need to fund inflationary growth in staffing and commissioned services costs before consideration of allocating funds to new services.

<p>2024/25." Has the council factored in that there could be growth to the public health fund and if so, which services could be reviewed so as to minimise cuts?</p>	
<p>Q13 - Could you confirm the amount of Improved Better Care Fund for 2021-22 in 6.2.3A Appendix 3 - Draft New Growth Proposals Summary?</p>	<p>The MTFS estimates an Improved Better Care Fund allocation of £16.316m for 2021-22.</p>
<p>6.2.2 Appendix 2 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024 Detail by Service Area, item 6.2 Q4 Can we add a 2019/20 summary column to Appendix 2 so that we can see the progression over time as well as a have a year for comparison not affected by COVID? I have not been able to find 'final' 2019/20 results in an MTFS format anywhere</p>	<p>The 2021-24 MTFS Appendix 2 shows budget movements from the current 2020-21 budgets to demonstrate the impact of previously agreed and new proposed growth and savings for the next three years on the current budgets for each directorate. The current budgets include target adjustments (budget movements between directorates) during the year, such as for centralisation of support services, and therefore a comparison of directorate budgets with 2019-20 would be affected by these internal changes and not reflect a comparison on the same bases. Please refer to the response to Q1 of Item 6.2 above regarding the impact of Covid on in-year short-term financial pressures versus medium term financial strategy budgeting.</p>
<p>Q5 Inflation - CPIH is currently 0.6% as at November 2020 versus 1.5% a year ago but the inflation assumptions have not changed and remain at £6.5 million for 2021/22. The inflation budget for 2020/21 was £7.5 million but inflation fell in 2020/21 (MTFS now says £3,669). Can we have some analysis confirming the benefit in 2020 from CPI falling and the impact on the MTFS and what this means for 2021/22?</p>	<p>Regarding pay inflation, the Spending Review 2020 has indicated that the government will not provide funding for a 2021-22 pay increase, except for an increase for those under £24,000 per annum of at least £250, however the pay award agreement may agree an increase (which the Council would need to provide funding for).</p> <p>Regarding non-pay inflation, individual contracts will have inflation clauses within them which state what inflation measure (and which reference month is used for this) or other measure (e.g. London Living Wage for homecare) or fixed percentage or fixed amount the contract value will be increased by. Therefore, a short-term decrease in CPI/RPI may not decrease the contractual inflation requirement.</p>
<p>Q6 3.6.5 salary inflation. Can we have a summary for the last 3 years + plus 2021/22 of agreed salary increases versus CPIH inflation - so that we can see how Council staff pay has changed relative to inflation</p>	<p>2018-19 Non-teachers' pay award average increase = 3.06% 2018-19 CPIH inflation at September 2018 = 2.2%</p> <p>2019-20 Non-teachers' pay award average increase = 3.75% 2019-20 CPIH inflation at September 2019 = 1.7%</p>

	<p>2020-21 Non-teachers' pay award average increase = 2.75%</p> <p>2020-21 CPIH inflation at September 2020 = 0.7%</p> <p>2021-22 Non-teachers' pay award is not yet agreed.</p>
Q10 p91 What does the 50th anniversary of the independence of Bangladeshi have to do with LBTH?	<p>Tower Hamlets has the largest Bangladeshi population in the UK and a reputation for celebrating and supporting Bengali culture. The 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh is a significant event for our Bengali residents (32% of our population). This commemorative event provides a platform for the council to engage with local Bengali arts and cultural organisations to celebrate Bengali culture with other residents across the borough and supports Strategic Outcome 8 (People feel they are part of a cohesive and vibrant community).</p> <p>The borough has a history of supporting equalities-based events to tackle hate crime and support cohesion including Black History Month, Chinese New Year, St George's Day etc as well Language Movement Day (Martyrs Day) and the Boishakhi Mela. Whilst we are unable to deliver events for Martyrs Day this year (and unable to carry out the Mela), the 50th Anniversary provides a focus for the borough to support awareness of Bengali culture and promote cohesion.</p>
Q11 p91 Was an attempt made to seek funding from Hackney Council to continue the fireworks?	Hackney Council has previously stated that they will not provide financial support for any events or contribute to the upkeep of Victoria Park. No additional requests for funding from Hackney council have been sought, given their position on this matter.
Q12 What has been the average pay increase been for those residents of LBTH in work in the last year?	We do not hold that data.
<u>Appendix 4 - Savings proposals 21/22 to 23/24</u>	
SAV/ RES/ 007 - What are the council's Change programmes?	<p>The council currently has three corporate change programmes which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontline Services- focussed on modernising the way we deliver services to the community and how people can access them. This includes putting more services online whilst ensuring that those who are digitally excluded are effectively supported to access services, as well as changing the way we

	<p>deliver to maximise efficiency and improve outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Services- focussed on improving and streamlining our back-office functions. • Digital- focussed on modernising our IT systems to support improved delivery.
<p>SAV/ RES/ 003 - What are the plans for these assets to be alternatively or additionally used?</p>	<p>Full options appraisals and plans for any building fully or partially released as a result of this proposal will be developed once the outcome of the public consultation is known and a decision is taken on whether to close or reduce hours at any of the Library/Idea Stores. However, we understand that some of these sites have historical and community significance. It is our intention to pursue options that would keep these buildings within our property portfolio but generate an income stream to offset the costs of maintaining the asset.</p>
<p>SAV/ PLA/ 009 - What is the MHCLG's current assessments of LBTH's homelessness prevention rates? When and how will investment be made into this service to achieve this savings?</p>	<p>The Council's success rate for homelessness prevention and relief is published in the self-reported statutory returns which Tower Hamlets submits to government. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness. Typically, the rate of prevention and relief success is calculated by MHCLG as a proportion of all outcomes.</p> <p>In the last published figures – April-June 2020 – the borough recorded a prevention success rate of 38.6%. For the same period, the prevention success rate was 58% across England and 51% for the whole of London respectively.</p> <p>In the last published figures – April-June 2020 – the borough recorded a Relief success rate of 39%. The service has been opening far more cases each quarter than it closes which the service is working to rectify, e.g. the Prevention and Relief Duty was accepted for 527 cases in April-June 2020 whilst the respective duty was ended and outcomes reported on only 355 cases. Calculating successful outcomes as a proportion of cases opened, then, the borough's prevention rate in April-June 2020 was 36% and the borough achieved a Relief success rate of 21%.</p> <p>Investment to achieve savings will take two forms and will be required from April 2021:</p>

	<p>1 – funding for cash incentives to significantly increase the supply of PRS units available to prevent and relieve homelessness</p> <p>2 - funding for additional staffing (homelessness prevention caseworkers, PRS procurement specialists, TA income recovery officers, dedicated TA move-on officers, employment ben cap adviser, service manager).</p>
<p>SAV/ PLA/ 001 - Can income from this proposal only stay within the Directorate Service?</p>	<p>The Council operates a separate Controlled Parking Account in accordance with s.55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended by the 1991 Road Traffic Act), the costs of which are incorporated within the income and expenditure for Highways, Roads and Transport Services.</p> <p>This account records all income and expenditure attributable to on-street parking activities, including enforcement. The account may incur a deficit in the year, in which case this deficit must be made good from the General Fund at the year end. The use of any surplus is prescribed by legislation and is restricted largely to reinvestment within the service and highways and transportation initiatives, therefore restricting the availability of income from the additional mobile cameras outside of the Place Directorate.</p>
<p>SAV /HAC/ 015 - £105k to close Health E1 Homelessness Drug and Alcohol Service What alternative pathways are available for these service users? are they appropriate to their needs?</p>	<p>The Reset Homelessness Drug and Alcohol Service (RHDAS) caters for individuals with identified substance misuse needs, who are street-homeless or in unstable accommodation, and is delivered within the Health E1 primary care service commissioned by Integrated Commissioning. It is an enhanced service for this cohort in that it allows service users to access substance misuse treatment and have primary health care needs met within a 'one stop' treatment setting.</p> <p>Following the decommissioning of RHDAS, the cohort will continue to have their general primary health care needs met within Health E1 Primary Care Service. Substance misuse needs/treatment will be met within the Tower Hamlets generic substance misuse pathway delivered within Reset (Tower Hamlets Adult Treatment Service).</p> <p>The cohort are amongst those most difficult to engage and retain in treatment. The enhanced service that this cohort currently receive, within RHDAS is designed to</p>

	<p>support both the engagement and retention of these service users. To mitigate the impact of not having a specialist pathway, the Reset service will deliver more 'flexibility' for this group of service users as part of its delivery of an appropriate level of evidence-based substance misuse treatment for adults in Tower Hamlets. The recent success of the Tower Hamlets bid for funding from the PHE Rough Sleeping Substance Misuse Treatment Fund will further allow for an enhanced treatment pathway for this cohort. This will further mitigate risks from the decommissioning of this service.</p>
<p>Can we have more details of the bid for Reset Enhanced Rough Sleeping Pathway for women. What is the size of the grant bid for, how does it differ from the service currently on offer and when will LBTH know whether the bid has been successful?</p>	<p>We were informed at the end of December 2020 that Tower Hamlets Council were successful in our bid for funding from the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant. We were awarded a grant of £615,285 in year one, and funding is guaranteed for at least two years.</p> <p>Our trauma informed model of delivery for this new pathway will include a 'ring fenced' resource for those sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough. The pathway will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'ring fenced' clinical access • Specialised 'rough sleeper' engagement and retention workers. These will offer end to end engagement with the cohort. • Assertive Outreach • Specialised Rough Sleeper Navigators. Women that sleep rough have specific needs due to risks of violence/abuse and mental health. We will mitigate against this lack of specific support through a dedicated Women's Navigator role within the pathway. • Clinical Psychologist to offer case work and to develop the wider workforce in delivery of a trauma informed approach.
<p>SAV/ HAC/ 009 -Please can we have a list of all the programmes this fund and their measured outcomes?</p>	<p>From the evaluation by the University of East London (UEL) – activity from October 2018 to September 2020</p>

Activity category	Types of activities	Number of resident-led activities	Minimum number of occasions activities were held	Minimum number of attendances
1. Physical wellbeing	37	15	572	4,420
2. Connecting local communities and partnerships	79	29	277	2,169
3. Food security	6	4	10	40
4. Wider experiences/tasters	75	23	83	4,350
5. Environmental improvements	8	7	43	123
6. Project governance	43	29	263	625
7. Arts and craft activities	9	5	63	483
8. Knowledge exchange	43	13	167	1,260
9. Emotional wellbeing support	6	2	87	737
TOTALS	306	127	1,565	14,167

Data from Jan 2020 to Dec 2020 (from March re-deployment to Covid related activities)

	Grand Total
Number of registered contacts with the programme (Total contacts)	8994
Number of unique participants	4017
Number of Repeat contacts	2471
Total number of volunteers	291
Registrations	664
People involved in steering groups	50

Evaluation findings

The draft evaluation by University of East London has highlighted that the programme has supported 300 types of activities with over 1500 sessions that have been run by, for and with residents with 14,000 attendances across the most deprived neighbourhoods in the borough. The evaluation is shaped around systematically measuring indicators in relation to Outcomes 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 of the strategic plan. It demonstrates the link between resident driven activities linked to their express needs around community opportunities, cohesion, security, open space, children and young people, cleanliness and communications. The programme has particularly engaged Bangladeshi women aged 25-44 (unwaged, likely to be a carer). Participants have reported positive shifts in health and wellbeing based on validated measures from the Tower Hamlets Together I Statement frameworks. The evaluation concludes that the programme 'has effectively served to build shared understanding of 'place', 'safety' and 'belonging' in residents. Focus group work with residents around the next phase

	of CDC has identified four themes of focus – practical support, community involvement, information needs and self-development.
<p>SAV/ HAC/ 008 - What are the targets and achieved outcomes for all these services over their life so far?</p> <p>What are the anticipated targets and outcomes post saving?</p> <p>How is the contract for Reset expected to be changed?</p>	<p>The current Reset service commenced following a procurement exercise in November 2019. The new service then underwent a period of mobilisation prior to the outbreak of Covid in March 2020. The treatment system reports on a number of key performance and outcome measures. There is a detailed performance management outcomes framework. Below are the performance highlights for Q4 2019 – 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion who successfully completed treatment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opiate 6.5% (slightly above national average) Non-opiate 36.3% (slightly above national average) Alcohol 43.0% (above national average) <p>The impact of the re- procurement and resulting change of provider in Q3 2019/20 impacted on the successful completion measures in Q1 and Q2 2020/21. While alcohol and non-opiate outcomes remain above the national average, opiate treatment outcomes decreased below the national average of 5.5%. The latest rate in TH was 4.3%. While this impact was expected, the subsequent impact of Covid on the substance misuse landscape and the significant increase in new referrals into services will impact further on the opiate measure as the service did not discharge clients between April and July to mitigate the risks of Covid to service users.</p> <p>The transfer of the Reset Homelessness Drug and Alcohol Service (RHDAS) opiate cohort (around 60 clients) will have some impact on the overall opiate successful completions target. While Reset Treatment has around 1,200 opiate clients on their case load, an additional 60 opiate clients will make the target more challenging to achieve.</p> <p>The current Reset contract includes a Payment by Results (PBR) element which equates to approximately 10% of contract value. Initial negotiations with the provider have concentrated on reducing the PBR payment, to achieve the saving, limiting service impact. The PBR does incentivise providers to achieve a number of key</p>

	performance indicators, so the DAAT will monitor closely the impact in the reduction in PBR to ensure that performance is not impacted. Discussions with the provider are ongoing
SAV/ CHI/ 009 - Please can we have a copy of the advice stating how and why this can be funded from DSG rather than General Fund. Why has this saving only been identified now?	There are specific duties which can be funded from DSG that are allocated to the Council to meet its statutory duties, Maintained Schools are also able to de delegate funding to support services that are only provided to them. This funding has been available in the last two years however was utilised to support the overspend in the high needs block. With the increase in the available funding in the high needs block and the DfE recognition that overspends may be recovered over a longer period there is the opportunity to direct this funding to support services that have previously been underwritten by General Fund but are School related costs.
SAV/CHI/ 001 21-22 on page 2 it says that there is no impact on resources available to address inequality, but this seems to conflict with the information in the Risk and Mitigation section on p1. What will be the impact on children who are behind in their language acquisition, and how will this not impact inequality?	The support of language acquisition is a key priority in the early years, and this is reflected in the professional development for all staff and in the interventions provided for some children. The cessation of this additional EP support will reduce specialist capacity and may have some impact on language acquisition, however the approach taken to ensure all staff have skills to support language development will mitigate this. This is an effective model that other local authorities deploy. The wording of the Equality Analysis Screening Tool will be reviewed.
SAV/ Chi 005/ 21-22 – The risk section makes mention of a possible exponential rise in costs. Are we confident that we have the staffing and infrastructure in place to make the necessary improvements in early help to make these savings possible? Further, the EA screening tool has not been completed properly. What is the impact on front line services?	Throughout the Covid 19 Pandemic, we have managed to ensure that services have been maintained and have managed any changes in demand. The current re-structure aligns much of the current Youth and Early Help services into the same management structure as Children’s Social Care. This should assist in ensuring that any additional pressures can be absorbed across the wider service. The EA screening tool will be reviewed.
SAV/ CHI 006/ 21-22 et al – Like several others, this saving relies on dampening demand through more targeted early help. While this makes sense in a BAU context, how can we be assured that this	The Savings Proposal also recognises that there remains an element of risk in these service reductions, particularly at this point. However, so far through-out the pandemic our “Looked After” Children numbers have remained stable, and although CP number have risen, they remain in line with Statistical neighbours.

(and other savings which rely on the same rationale) are achievable in the immediate aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic given the increased vulnerability of our young population and the increase in poverty which we know increases LAC? Further, how does the reduction in Early Help Capacity referenced in SAV / CHI 007 / 21-22 impact on the achievability of this saving? Surely, we can't burn the candle at both ends?



Item 6.1 The Council's 2021-22 Budget Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-24	
Questions	Response
<p>In the Capital Programme it puts £15m aside for purchase of housing for Temporary Accommodation. Is this a new fund or the continuation of an existing programme/agreement?</p>	<p>This is a continuation of an existing programme that was originally approved in 2016/17. An increase in budget from an already approved £24.597m to £30m was approved as part of the November 2020 Cabinet report</p>
<p>Section 3.10.8 Allowing for the stated 8% increase to the High Needs Block what is the accrued deficit that will be bought forward?</p>	<p>The accrued deficit bought forward from 2019/20 was a total DSG deficit of £11.8m, of which £13.2m was attributable to the high needs block (schools block surpluses offset) we are currently forecasting that the in year high needs block will be balanced for 2020/21 and therefore the deficit bought forward would be at the same level. (Answered to James also)</p>
<p>Section 3.10.10 As the Schools Forum confirmed some areas will not be de-delegated, such as SLS, as part of the formal budget setting process when and where will the Council confirm the budget arrangements for those non de-delegated areas of budget?</p>	<p>The SLS service is funded through the high needs block. The budget for high needs is included in the budget summary at summary level and included in detail in the budget book. As part of the significant high needs overspend, all costs within the high needs block have been reviewed including the SLS service costs to support the long-term sustainability of funding to schools who are delivering the majority of high needs support.</p>
<p>Section 3.11.27 states "No further additions to the HRA will be considered until the two reports that Savills are working on are completed" However, the Council appointed Savills in January 2020, "to review the borrowing and investment capacity within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and other opportunities available to deliver affordable housing, in the light of the abolition of the HRA debt cap and potential introductions of new flexibilities for the reinvestment of Right-to-buy receipts. The primary driver was to establish if additional new homes could be delivered alongside investment in the existing stock including fire safety and energy efficiency works." Could some of the draft finding be shared with the Cabinet and O&S committee so to consider how realistic the figure of £232.768m is for the delivery of the first 1,000 council homes programme?</p>	<p>The impact of ongoing stock conditions works, fire safety and energy efficiency works impact on the delivery of the second 1,000 homes. The Business Plan has been costed based on estimated costs of schemes either on site or due to be going on site and therefore the figure of £232.768m is deemed a realistic cost of the delivery of this programme.</p>

<p>On the 23 September 2020 the Cabinet heard that “11.3.7 The HRA Business Plan Review, which has recently been completed, has established that there is sufficient funding available, for the capital works identified through the existing stock condition surveys, the anticipated costs of fire and building safety works that are expected from new regulations and the delivery of the first 1,000 council homes.” Could the updated HRA Business Plan Review be circulated with the budget papers? https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=172684</p>	<p>The summary sheet detailing the financial position of the 30-year HRA Business Plan has been provided separately.</p>
<p>Regarding section “3.11.74 The cumulative impact on the HRA will not be clear until the various reforms all take effect. Provision has been made within the HRA MTFP for an increase in bad debts could the Council outline the provision that has been made?</p>	<p>The provision for bad debts for tenant rents held on the balance sheet is £4.168m. There is a revenue budget of £600k to increase this provision.</p>
<p>Considering the highlighted areas of the Social Housing White Paper in the Cabinet report, is the Council reconsidering bring Tower Hamlets Homes ‘in house’ and if so, what is the timeline that the Council is working towards?</p>	<p>Cabinet agreed to extend the THH management agreement in July 2019 for 4 years, from 2020, with a possible 4-year extension beyond that. The new agreement was signed in July 2020, so it is in the first year.</p>
<p>Capital works to Parks 3.12.43 “Capital works are proposed for Victoria Park in 2021-22” has the Bonner Gate been included in the capital works proposal?</p>	<p>The Bonner Gate repairs will be completed under the parks repairs and maintenance budget. As the gate is listed, quotes have been obtained from specialist restoration firms who were recommended by English Heritage and the works will be scheduled to be undertaken as soon as the procurement is complete.</p>
<p>3.12.51 What level of funding review is needed for Seahorse Homes Ltd? When will the report go to Cabinet? And is the impact on the future supply of housing likely to be considerable?</p>	<p>Potential funding sources for Seahorses homes was set out in the Cabinet report in February 2017 that agreed to set up the company. Since then housing market conditions have changed and treasury conditions have changed in relation to loans. These require a review of the potential funding sources, the outcome of which will be reported to Cabinet. Seahorses housing activities are not currently included in the strategy for increasing affordable housing supply in the borough and therefore any impact is not deemed considerable</p>
<p>Has the “Income Through Housing Companies - reprofile of agreed saving RES08/18-19 SAV / COP 001 / 21-22 (250)” been identified by Savills? If so, please could the report be circulated to the committee?</p>	<p>The saving RES08/18-19 SAV / COP 001 / 21-22 relates to affordable housing within the general fund and has therefore not been included within the HRA Business Plan as part of Savills work</p>

<p>Is there a concern that with the financial pressures and changes to that the Council's reliance on the staffing reduction outlined in the Integrated Commissioning staffing reductions SAV / HAC 004 / 21-22 may increase the risk to adult social care delivery in the borough?</p>	<p>The staffing reduction outlined is already in place and was implemented in August 2020 providing some in year savings in 2020/21 which are being permanently captured as savings in this MTFs. It ensures sufficient capacity at the right levels to ensure that commissioning work can be maintained - CCG roles within the team were unaffected by this re-structure. The service operates as a joint commissioning function across the Council and CCG supporting outcomes across health, social care, and broader wellbeing in line with best practice.</p>
<p>Could the committee see the list of the VCS organisations referred to in SAV / HAC 007 / 21-22 (i.e. organisations that have been identified as providing services to violence victims who are admitted to the Royal London Hospital)?</p>	<p>There is one, main charitable organisation working with victims of violence in the royal London Hospital. St Giles Trust UK - a national charity are commissioned by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to work with victims of violence. They offer a wraparound service to victims of violence admitted to the hospital. Discussions will be had with partners and stakeholders to see if funding may be identified to mitigate the unmet need in the trauma unit for victims treated and discharged within 24 hours who are often repeat victims of violence</p>
<p>What has changed between the 6th January and 27th January version of the report (for the General Fund)?</p>	<p>The Cabinet report for 27 January includes the capital programme, the HRA growth proforma and HRA saving proforma (these are included in the proposed growth and proposed savings appendices) and the Lower Tier Services Grant (please refer to paragraph 3.5.24 in the report).</p>
<p>Given that Tower Hamlets has the worst ASB rates in the country and that in the last Residents Survey it was the issue with the highest concern where is the additional capital funding to help with this? (the current £3.4 m is largely an upgrade of the existing CCTV network not an expansion of it)</p>	<p>CCTV is an important component of the Council's response to crime and ASB, although by no means the sole or primary mechanism available to counter its impact. The Council has committed to replacing its existing analogue CCTV network by autumn 2022 with a new digital system that will provide equivalent coverage but much better image quality and reliability. £3.1m of capital funding was approved by Cabinet in July 2020. The detailed project business case has progressed through the Council's internal governance structure, and it is</p>

	<p>anticipated that the final confirmation will be provided c. February 2021</p>
<p>Q3 The GLA Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Development Infrastructure Funding Study assumed that all CIL and s106 earned in the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar area had been spent in that area in order to minimise infrastructure funding deficits for that area, is that the assumption guiding the allocation of CIL and s106 monies?</p>	<p>The Council is required to consider the infrastructure needs across the entire borough alongside the income available to fund this infrastructure. It does this through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identifies significant needs boroughwide. The IDP also identifies the income forecast to be secured through CIL and S106. This is higher in some areas, not only because of the level of development, but also the scale of charges which are higher where development sales values are higher. The increased charges are not in balance with the cost of delivering infrastructure items, which is broadly the same across the borough. Given this the Council is required to consider how best it uses the funding secured to support the meeting of needs across the borough.</p> <p>Additionally, infrastructure is often delivered as part of a boroughwide network, such as Secondary Schools and other initiatives are required to cross multiple wards to be effective, such as traffic and highway improvements.</p> <p>The Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS) identifies a range of infrastructure needs for the area over the short, medium and long terms. The Council are working to ensure that all forms of funding at the Council's disposal are used alongside external investment to deliver the requirements of both the DIFS and the boroughwide IDP. The Infrastructure Prioritisation and Financing Delivery Plan (PFDP) referred to in the Cabinet Report will support this work boroughwide, including the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar area.</p> <p>There is a lag time between receiving funding and the delivery of infrastructure, however the area is benefitting from</p>

	considerable use of CIL, S106 and secured external investment, and delivery is accelerating through the current Capital Programme. This includes the use of boroughwide funds to support strategic schemes such as the school and health centre on Wood Wharf. Alongside this, the Council is using the planning system to require developers to deliver a range of schools, health centres and parks on-site on the Isle of Dogs, worth hundreds of millions £'s. This process ties delivery to the time that development happens and can be considered as 'spend' directly in the neighbourhood where development occurs. Additionally, 25% of CIL is spent locally through the Local Infrastructure Fund, which is currently developing a range of improvements to local parks, public realm and more.
6.1.6 Projected Movement in Reserves, item 6.1	
Q1 New Homes Bonus - substantial reserves are due to be maintained £37.8 million by March 2023, what is the long-term plan, if any for this money?	The New Homes Bonus reserve would be utilised to fund any General Fund overspends, including any pressures above government funding for the impacts of the Covid pandemic on increased spend and reduced income. This would include Collection Fund deficit pressures above government funding due to the impact of the pandemic on business rates and council tax.
Q2 What is the estimated loss now in 2020/21 between inflation and interest earned on these reserves? (historically our reserves lost value as inflation exceeded interest earned)	As at November 2020, the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation was 0.3%, down from 0.7% in October. The Council's average income return of 1.01% is higher and therefore the future value of the funds invested is currently maintained.
Appendix 8F Capital Potential Assets for Disposal	
Q1 The list does not include Jack Dash House, which in various previous documents had been listed as an asset the Council wish to sell, what is the plan now for Jack Dash House?	In respect of Jack Dash House, the asset management team are currently undertaking a policy of letting the vacant space. The 4 th floor was recently let and other space including the 3 rd

	<p>floor is currently under offer. These are at commercial rents and include a service charge element. At this time there is no strategy to dispose of it, but it is slowly morphing from an occupational property to effectively an income producing property. These leases are for up to 10 years and will be providing revenue for the Council. There is still the potential to dispose of it at a later stage as it is no longer required as workspace for LBTH employees.</p>
<p>Q2 How confident are we in these values given the changes in the market since the pandemic struck?</p>	<p>Where necessary the Council are obtaining supplemental valuations to reflect any changes in the market. Where these differ from earlier valuations we are advising as appropriate.</p>
<p>Q3 What do the colours mean, green, orange, red on the report?</p>	<p>The colour coding means: Green: capital receipt expected to be received in 2020/21 (short-term) Amber: capital receipt likely but not certain (medium-term) Red: potential to generate a capital receipt but not certain (long-term)</p> <p>CCTV</p>

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Financial Year	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	2030.31
HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY											
Dwelling rents	66,215,454	68,403,117	72,008,662	74,839,871	77,451,568	79,260,615	80,652,931	82,134,819	83,643,722	85,180,127	86,744,531
Non-dwelling rents	4,311,800	4,434,060	4,522,741	4,613,196	4,705,460	4,799,569	4,895,561	4,993,472	5,093,341	5,195,208	5,299,112
Service charge income	25,393,080	25,868,027	26,314,655	27,201,681	28,121,128	28,683,550	29,257,221	29,842,366	30,439,213	31,047,997	31,668,957
Other income and contributions	115,000	115,575	117,887	120,244	122,649	125,102	127,604	130,156	132,759	135,415	138,123
Total income	96,035,334	98,820,779	102,963,945	106,774,992	110,400,805	112,868,837	114,933,316	117,100,813	119,309,036	121,558,747	123,850,723
Repairs & maintenance	16,798,638	17,338,813	17,833,780	18,265,621	18,680,647	19,095,747	19,477,662	19,867,215	20,264,560	20,669,851	21,083,248
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	53,919,144	54,782,612	54,910,570	56,130,071	57,353,992	58,501,071	59,671,093	60,864,515	62,081,805	63,323,441	64,589,910
Bad debts	616,679	608,713	598,358	600,637	621,618	636,151	647,316	659,202	671,305	683,628	696,176
Dwelling Depreciation	18,104,000	18,379,000	18,705,000	18,828,000	18,839,000	19,859,016	20,224,113	20,595,870	20,974,408	21,359,850	21,752,319
Debt management	431,000	440,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	89,869,461	91,549,138	92,489,708	94,266,330	95,937,256	98,533,986	100,462,184	102,428,803	104,434,078	106,478,770	108,563,653
Net income from services	6,165,873	7,271,641	10,474,237	12,508,662	14,463,549	14,334,851	14,471,133	14,672,010	14,874,957	15,079,977	15,287,070
Interest payable	-2,394,667	-3,496,547	-4,723,581	-5,024,095	-5,010,871	-5,457,303	-6,269,018	-7,243,231	-7,909,058	-8,038,346	-7,903,434
Interest income	574,222	446,033	267,985	227,322	137,143	-65,373	-20,140	10,475	41,891	74,124	107,192
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	4,345,428	4,221,126	6,018,640	7,711,889	9,589,821	8,812,175	8,181,975	7,439,254	7,007,789	7,115,755	7,490,828
Set aside for debt repayment	-1,375,640	-2,060,652	-3,736,195	-4,344,599	-4,257,707	-4,320,183	-4,867,187	-5,429,329	-6,002,679	-6,334,849	-6,251,728
Revenue contributions to capital	-	-	-	-17,588,673	-30,668,583	-4,278,689	-3,097,219	-1,788,005	-778,752	-550,020	-736,011
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	2,969,788	2,160,475	2,282,445	-14,221,383	-25,336,469	213,303	217,569	221,920	226,359	230,886	503,089
HRA Balance brought forward	42,810,285	45,780,073	47,940,548	50,222,993	36,001,610	10,665,140	10,878,443	11,096,012	11,317,932	11,544,291	11,775,177
HRA surplus/(deficit)	2,969,788	2,160,475	2,282,445	-14,221,383	-25,336,469	213,303	217,569	221,920	226,359	230,886	503,089
HRA Balance carried forward	45,780,073	47,940,548	50,222,993	36,001,610	10,665,140	10,878,443	11,096,012	11,317,932	11,544,291	11,775,177	12,278,266
Alert											
Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	10,000,000	10,000,000	5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-5,000,000	-5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	10,000,000	5,000,000	-								

London Borough of Tower Hamlets HRA Business
Base Version
HRA Summary

Year	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Financial	2031.32	2032.33	2033.34	2034.35	2035.36	2036.37	2037.38	2038.39	2039.40	2040.41
HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY										
Dwelling rents	88,337,439	89,959,366	91,610,834	93,292,378	95,004,539	96,747,869	98,522,931	100,330,296	102,170,547	104,044,275
Non-dwelling rents	5,405,094	5,513,196	5,623,460	5,735,929	5,850,648	5,967,661	6,087,014	6,208,754	6,332,930	6,459,588
Service charge income	32,302,336	32,948,383	33,607,351	34,279,498	34,965,088	35,664,389	36,377,677	37,105,231	37,847,335	38,604,282
Other income and contributions	140,885	143,703	146,577	149,509	152,499	155,549	158,660	161,833	165,070	168,371
Total income	126,185,755	128,564,648	130,988,222	133,457,313	135,972,773	138,535,468	141,146,282	143,806,114	146,515,881	149,276,517
Repairs & maintenance	21,504,913	21,935,011	22,373,711	22,821,186	23,277,609	23,743,162	24,218,025	24,702,385	25,196,433	25,700,362
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	65,881,708	67,199,342	68,543,329	69,914,196	71,312,480	72,738,729	74,193,504	75,677,374	77,190,921	78,734,740
Bad debts	708,952	721,961	735,206	748,693	762,425	776,407	790,643	805,138	819,896	834,923
Dwelling Depreciation	22,151,943	22,558,851	22,973,174	23,395,047	23,824,606	24,261,989	24,707,337	25,160,795	25,622,508	26,092,625
Debt management	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	110,689,516	112,857,165	115,067,422	117,321,122	119,619,120	121,962,287	124,351,509	126,787,692	129,271,758	131,804,649
Net income from services	15,496,239	15,707,482	15,920,801	16,136,192	16,353,653	16,573,182	16,794,773	17,018,423	17,244,123	17,471,867
Interest payable	-7,745,366	-7,590,458	-7,438,649	-7,289,876	-7,146,388	-7,023,405	-6,926,132	-6,839,531	-6,759,738	-6,692,800
Interest income	143,841	183,171	226,574	263,132	300,072	324,122	363,537	395,551	410,443	416,159
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	7,894,715	8,300,195	8,708,726	9,109,447	9,507,338	9,873,899	10,232,178	10,574,442	10,894,827	11,195,226
Set aside for debt repayment	-6,126,693	-6,004,159	-5,884,076	-5,766,395	-5,651,067	-5,538,756	-5,458,587	-5,386,465	-5,323,009	-5,261,527
Revenue contributions to capital	-1,082,724	-1,293,567	-2,577,242	-3,143,763	-5,008,239	-4,069,928	-4,503,072	-4,912,047	-5,290,370	-5,646,622
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	685,298	1,002,469	247,407	199,290	-1,151,968	265,215	270,520	275,930	281,449	287,077
HRA Balance brought forward	12,278,266	12,963,564	13,966,032	14,213,440	14,412,730	13,260,762	13,525,977	13,796,496	14,072,426	14,353,875
HRA surplus/(deficit)	685,298	1,002,469	247,407	199,290	-1,151,968	265,215	270,520	275,930	281,449	287,077
HRA Balance carried forward	12,963,564	13,966,032	14,213,440	14,412,730	13,260,762	13,525,977	13,796,496	14,072,426	14,353,875	14,640,952
Alert										
Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	-									

London Borough of Tower Hamlets HRA Business
Base Version
HRA Summary

Year	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Financial	2041.42	2042.43	2043.44	2044.45	2045.46	2046.47	2047.48	2048.49	2049.50

HRA 30 YEAR SUMMARY

Dwelling rents	105,952,085	107,894,589	109,872,413	111,886,191	113,936,572	116,024,213	118,149,786	120,313,972	122,517,465
Non-dwelling rents	6,588,780	6,720,556	6,854,967	6,992,066	7,131,907	7,274,545	7,420,036	7,568,437	7,719,806
Service charge income	39,376,368	40,163,895	40,967,173	41,786,516	42,622,247	43,474,692	44,344,185	45,231,069	46,135,691
Other income and contributions	171,738	175,173	178,677	182,250	185,895	189,613	193,405	197,273	201,219
Total income	152,088,971	154,954,213	157,873,229	160,847,024	163,876,621	166,963,063	170,107,413	173,310,751	176,574,180
Repairs & maintenance	26,214,369	26,738,656	27,273,429	27,818,898	28,375,276	28,942,781	29,521,637	30,112,070	30,714,311
Management (incl Rents, Rates & Taxes)	80,309,435	81,915,623	83,553,936	85,225,015	86,929,515	88,668,105	90,441,467	92,250,297	94,095,303
Bad debts	850,223	865,801	881,662	897,811	914,253	930,994	948,039	965,393	983,062
Dwelling Depreciation	26,571,298	27,058,680	27,554,930	28,060,206	28,574,671	29,098,490	29,631,833	30,174,870	30,727,775
Debt management	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000
Total costs	134,387,324	137,020,761	139,705,957	142,443,929	145,235,715	148,082,371	150,984,976	153,944,629	156,962,451
Net income from services	17,701,647	17,933,452	18,167,272	18,403,095	18,640,906	18,880,693	19,122,437	19,366,122	19,611,729
Interest payable	-6,636,545	-6,577,008	-6,512,792	-6,443,771	-6,342,395	-6,215,547	-6,091,236	-5,969,411	-5,850,023
Interest income	421,992	427,943	434,016	440,211	453,935	549,469	648,756	752,504	860,656
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	11,487,094	11,784,387	12,088,496	12,399,535	12,752,447	13,214,614	13,679,957	14,149,216	14,622,363
Set aside for debt repayment	-5,218,246	-5,173,436	-5,125,010	-5,072,872	-5,016,924	-4,916,585	-4,818,253	-4,721,888	-4,627,450
Revenue contributions to capital	-5,976,029	-6,312,276	-6,658,837	-7,015,921	-	-	-	-	-
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	292,819	298,675	304,649	310,742	7,735,524	8,298,029	8,861,704	9,427,327	9,994,912
HRA Balance brought forward	14,640,952	14,933,771	15,232,447	15,537,096	15,847,838	23,583,361	31,881,391	40,743,095	50,170,422
HRA surplus/(deficit)	292,819	298,675	304,649	310,742	7,735,524	8,298,029	8,861,704	9,427,327	9,994,912
HRA Balance carried forward	14,933,771	15,232,447	15,537,096	15,847,838	23,583,361	31,881,391	40,743,095	50,170,422	60,165,334
Alert	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves brought forward (Thames Water)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriation from HRA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves carried forward	-								

Repairs & Ma	17%	16,798,638
Management	56%	53,919,144
Bad Debt Pro	1%	616,679
Treasury Mar	2%	2,251,445
Debt Repaym	-37%	-35,626,219
Capital Invest	57%	55,105,859
Surplus	3%	2,969,788
		96,035,334



	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25
Dwelling rents	£66,215,454	£68,403,117	£72,008,662	£74,839,871	£77,451,568
Non-dwelling rents	£4,311,800	£4,434,060	£4,522,741	£4,613,196	£4,705,460
Service charge income	£25,393,080	£25,868,027	£26,314,655	£27,201,681	£28,121,128
Other income and contribution	£115,000	£115,575	£117,887	£120,244	£122,649
Total Income	£96,035,334	£98,820,779	£102,963,945	#####	£110,400,805
Repairs & maintenance	-£16,798,638	-£17,338,813	-£17,833,780	-£18,265,621	-£18,680,647
Management (incl RRT)	-£53,919,144	-£54,782,612	-£54,910,570	-£56,130,071	-£57,353,992
Bad debts	-£616,679	-£608,713	-£598,358	-£600,637	-£621,618
Dwelling Depreciation	-£18,104,000	-£18,379,000	-£18,705,000	-£18,828,000	-£18,839,000
Debt management	-£443,000	-£440,000	-£442,000	-£442,000	-£442,000
Total costs	-£89,069,461	-£91,549,138	-£92,489,708	-£94,266,330	-£95,937,256
Interest payable	-£2,394,667	-£3,496,547	-£4,723,581	-£5,024,095	-£5,010,871
Interest income	£574,222	£446,033	£267,985	£227,322	£137,143
Revenue contributions to capit	£0	£0	£0	-£17,588,673	-£30,668,583
Opening Balance	£42,810,285	£47,155,713	£51,376,839	£57,395,479	£47,518,695
Surplus / (Deficit)	£4,345,428	£4,221,126	£6,018,640	-£9,876,784	-£21,078,762
Closing Balance	£47,155,713	£51,376,839	£57,395,479	£47,518,695	£26,439,933



THE FORWARD PLAN

Published: 23 February 2021

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The Forward Plan is published 28 days before each Cabinet meeting.

In addition, new issues and changes to existing issues will be published on the website as soon as they are known.

The web pages also contain past Forward Plans and publication deadlines for future Plans. To visit the web pages go to <http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>.

Tower Hamlets Council **Forthcoming Decisions Plan**

What is this document?

The Forthcoming Decisions Plan (or 'Forward Plan') contains information on significant decisions that the Council expects to take over the next few months.

As a minimum this will include notice of:

- All Key Decisions to be taken by the Mayor or Cabinet.
 - This could include decisions taken at public meetings or taken individually at other times.
- Budget and Policy Framework Decisions (for example the Budget Report itself and major policies to be agreed by Council as set out in the Constitution)

In addition the Council aims to publish all other decisions to be taken by the Mayor and/or Cabinet.

Key Decisions

The Council is required to publish notice of all key decisions at least 28 days before they are taken by the Executive. Key decisions are all those decisions which involve major spending, or savings, or which have a significant impact on the local community. The precise definition of a key decision adopted by Tower Hamlets is contained in Section 3 of the [Constitution](#). Key Decisions can be taken by the Mayor, the Mayor in Cabinet or an officer if it has been expressly delegated.

Publication of Forthcoming Decisions

Individual notices of new Key Decisions will be published on the website as they are known on the 'Forthcoming Decisions' page, whilst this 'Forthcoming Decisions Plan' collating these decisions will be published regularly, as a minimum at least, 28 days before each Cabinet meeting. The Plan will be published on the Council's website and will also be available to view at the Town Hall and Libraries, Ideas Centres and One Stop Shops if required.

Urgency

If, due to reasons of urgency, a Key Decision has to be taken where 28 days' notice have not been given. Notice will be published (on the website) as early as possible and Urgency Procedures as set out in the Constitution have to be followed.

Make your views known

The most effective way for the public to make their views known about a Forthcoming Decisions is to contact the lead officer, or Cabinet Member (where stated), listed. You can also view the Council's [Consultation Calendar](#), which lists all the issues on which the Council and its partners are consulting.

Information about the Decision Makers

Further information on the Mayor and Members of the Cabinet can be found on the Council's [website](#).

Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

The Council is also required to give at least 28 days' notice if it wishes to consider any of the reports on the agenda of an Executive meeting (such as Cabinet) in private session. The last row of each item below will indicate any proposal to consider that item in private session. Should you wish to make any representations in relation to item being considered in private please contact Democratic Services on the contact details listed on the front page.

The notice may reference a paragraph of Section 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act. In summary those paragraphs refer to the following types of exempt information (more information is available in the Constitution):

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority handling the information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:-
 - a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Contact Details for this Plan

Contact: Matthew Mannion
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Telephone: 020 7364 4651

Forward Plan February 2021

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*Action Plan in Response to the Community Building Scrutiny Challenge Session	24/03/21	35
*Action Plan in response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 'Review of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Response to COVID-19'	24/03/21	31
Amending the Policy on Housing Succession	Not before 03/03/21	13
Annual Council Performance & Delivery Report 2020/21	26/05/21	15
*Approval of extra spend on existing Northgate contract to bring customer and service benefits	24/03/21	33
Approval of the new Intermediate Housing Policy	24/03/21	17
*Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report	24/03/21	35
Bow bus gateway and timed closures exemptions considerations	03/03/21	27
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*Community Hubs	24/03/21	34
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*Future of the Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Designation	28/04/21	29
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*London Dock School – Funding Agreement and Leases	24/03/21	36
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Report and Recommendations following Housing Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-committee Challenge session on 2nd March 2020 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'	03/03/21	14
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Forward Plan February 2021

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision at Ben Jonson School'	03/03/21	22
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• Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory Notice on the proposal to amalgamate Cubitt Town Infants and Junior Schools • Decision on Amalgamation of Cubitt Town Infants and Junior Schools • Decision on Clo	03/03/21	6
• Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory proposal to close Shapla Primary School • Decision on Closure of Shapla Primary School.	03/03/21	7

* New Issues published since the last Forward Plan

Forward Plan February 2021

<p>Title of Report</p>	<p>• Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory Notice on the proposal to amalgamate Cubitt Town Infants and Junior Schools • Decision on Amalgamation of Cubitt Town Infants and Junior Schools • Decision on Clo</p>	<p>Ward All Wards</p>	<p>Key Decision? Yes</p>
<p>Summary of Decision</p>	<p>This report informs the council of the outcome of the four week period of public representation in response to the statutory notice on the proposal for the amalgamation (merger) of Cubitt Town Infants' and Cubitt Town Junior Schools from April 2022.</p> <p>This would require the closure of Cubitt Town Infants School and extending the age range of Cubitt Town Junior School, to establish a 3FE entry, all-through 3-11 Primary School.</p> <p>It recommends for the Mayor in cabinet to consider a decision on whether or not to formally proceed with plans for the schools' merger that would take effect from the 1st April 2022. Cubitt Town Infants School would therefore officially close on 31st March 2022</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

<p>Decision maker Date of decision</p>	<p>Cabinet 03/03/21</p>		
<p>Community Plan Theme</p>	<p>TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills</p>		
<p>Cabinet Member</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing</p>		
<p>Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place</p>	<p>Along with the general public, the following stakeholders were invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union. Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>A stage one consultation was held in the Summer term 2020. This was followed by Cabinet on 21 October 2020, agreeing to publish a statutory notice and proposal, for a four week formal consultation between 16th November 2020 and 16th December 2020. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders were invited to send any comments and or objections to the</p>		

Forward Plan February 2021

	Council. The statutory notice was published at the schools' and on the Council website and advertised in the Docklands & East London Advertiser.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	YES		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Notice • Copies of all representations received in response to the statutory proposal • Analysis of feedback from the statutory proposal • LA Pupil Projections 2020-2028 • Report on support to be provided to school staff • Summary analysis on the current financial position of both schools • Equalities Assessment (to be updated) 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory proposal to close Shapla Primary School • Decision on Closure of Shapla Primary School. 	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	<p>This report informs the council of the outcome of the four week period of public representation in response to the statutory notice on the proposal to close Shapla Primary School.</p> <p>It recommends for the Mayor in cabinet to consider a decision on whether or not to formally proceed with plans for Shapla Primary School to officially close on 31st August 2021</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

Decision maker	Cabinet
Date of decision	03/03/21
Community Plan	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration,

Forward Plan February 2021

Theme	education and skills		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Along with the general public, the following stakeholders were invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union. Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>A stage one consultation was held in the Summer term 2020. This was followed by Cabinet on 21 October 2020, agreeing to publish a statutory notice and proposal, for a four week formal consultation between 16th November 2020 and 16th December 2020. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders were invited to send any comments and or objections to the Council. The statutory notice was published at the schools' and on the Council website, and advertised in the Docklands & East London Advertiser.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	YES		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory proposal to close Shapla Primary School Decision on Closure of Shapla Primary School. 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory proposal to close Cherry Trees Special School. Decision on Closure of Cherry Trees Special School.	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report presents the outcome of the four week period of public representation in response to the statutory notice on the proposal to close Cherry Trees Special School.</p> <p>It recommends for the Mayor in cabinet to consider a decision on whether or not to formally proceed with plans for Cherry Trees Special School to officially close</p>		

Forward Plan February 2021

	<p>on 31st August 2021</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>
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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Along with the general public, the following stakeholders were invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union. Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>A stage one consultation was held in the Summer term 2020. This was followed by Cabinet on 25 November 2020, agreeing to publish a statutory notice and proposal, for a four week formal consultation between 4 December 2020 and 4 January 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders were invited to send any comments and or objections to the Council. The statutory notice was published at the schools' and on the Council website and advertised in the Docklands & East London Advertiser.</p>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	YES
Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Notice • Copies of all representations received in response to the statutory proposal • SEMH Policy • Analysis of feedback from the statutory proposal • Report on support to be provided to school staff • Summary analysis on the current financial position of Cherry Trees Special School • Equalities Assessment (to be updated)
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so	No, Unrestricted

Forward Plan February 2021

why?			
Title of Report	Report on the outcome of public representations received in response to the statutory proposal to close St Matthias Primary School. Decision on Closure of St Matthias Primary School.	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report informs the council of the outcome of the four week period of public representation in response to the statutory notice on the proposal to close St Matthias Primary School.</p> <p>It recommends for the Mayor in cabinet to consider a decision on whether or not to formally proceed with plans for St Matthias Primary School to officially close on 31st August 2021</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Along with the general public, the following stakeholders were invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union. Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>A stage one consultation was held in the Summer term 2020. This was followed by Cabinet on 25 November 2020, agreeing to publish a statutory notice and proposal, for a four week formal consultation between 4 December 2020 and 4 January 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders were invited to send any comments and or objections to the Council. The statutory notice was published at the schools' and on the Council website and advertised in the Docklands & East London Advertiser.</p>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	YES

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Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Notice • Copies of all representations received in response to the statutory proposal • Analysis of feedback from the statutory proposal • LA Pupil Projections 2020-2028 • Report on support to be provided to school staff • Summary analysis on the current financial position of St Matthias Primary School • Equalities Assessment (to be updated) 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Outcome of consultation on revised approach to day support in adult social care	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report will set out the outcome of a consultation on a new model of day support for adult social care and will seek approval on the final model.</p> <p>The report is a follow-up to the 28th October 2020 Cabinet report on day support. The October report described a new model with the following changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To have fewer day centre service buildings overall 2. To use day service buildings as community support hubs 3. To help people who need adult social care to use a bigger range of daytime activities 4. To support people to organise their own support through direct payments <p>These proposals include previously agreed savings of £317,000 per year from 2021-22 and proposes additional savings of £252,000 as part of the 2021-24 Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>Public consultation on these proposals ran from 9 November 2020 to 4 January 2021. This item will describe the outcome of the consultation and will present final proposals for the future of day support in adult social care for agreement.</p> <p>As in the October report, there is a direct impact of these changes on the Council's in-house day centres for older and disabled people (Riverside and Physical Disability Day Opportunities) and for people who need mental health support (Pritchards Road).</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in

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Theme			
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	To be outlined in report. Consultation proposals will be included as part of the item.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes. An Equality Impact Assessment will be included in the report.		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Claudia Brown (Divisional Director of Adults Social Care) Claudia.Brown@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Strategic performance and delivery reporting – Q3 2020/21	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report provides the Mayor in Cabinet with an update on the delivery and implementation of the council's Strategic Plan.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Mayor
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A None - this is a performance and delivery update
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)

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information	sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Amending the Policy on Housing Succession	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This report seeks to amend the Council's policy on housing succession and replace it with a new succession policy that accords with regulatory requirements and best practice.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet Not before 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Statutory Deputy Mayor for Community Safety, Faith and Equalities
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A No consultation required on this decision
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, EQIA will be included as an appendix to the Cabinet report.
Contact details for comments or additional information	Lindsey Gibson, Nicole Layton, Mark Slowikowski, Karen Swift (Executive Support Relationship Manager) lindsey.gibson@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Executive Support Team Leader, Place Nicole.Layton@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Strategy, Policy and Performance Manager) Mark.Slowikowski@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration) Karen.Swift@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted

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Title of Report	Report and Recommendations following Housing Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-committee Challenge session on 2nd March 2020 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This item submits the report and recommendations of the Housing and Regeneration Overview Scrutiny Sub-committee challenge session and the recommendations arising from the session for implementation.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Statutory Deputy Mayor for Community Safety, Faith and Equalities		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A N/A		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	N/A		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Una Bedford, Lindsey Gibson, Nicole Layton, Karen Swift Strategy and Policy Officer (Place) Una.Bedford@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Executive Support Relationship Manager) lindsey.gibson@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Executive Support Team Leader, Place Nicole.Layton@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration) Karen.Swift@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendix 1: Report of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee 'The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) – One year on'.		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	The Council's 2021-22 Budget Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-24	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes

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Summary of Decision	<p>This report sets out the draft budget for the financial year 2021-22.</p> <p>The report reviews and updates the assumptions made in setting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the years 2020-23 and incorporates a new financial year, 2023-24, to maintain the Council's three-year MTFS.</p>
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Decision maker Date of decision	Council 04/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>The Mayor, Lead Member for Resources and Voluntary Sector; and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be consulted.</p> <p>The Mayor, Lead Member for Resources and Voluntary Sector; and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be consulted.</p> <p>Public Consultation – October 2020 – December 2020</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	N/A		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Kevin Bartle (Interim Corporate Director, Resources) Kevin.Bartle@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Annual Council Performance & Delivery Report 2020/21	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report provides the Mayor in Cabinet with an update on delivery of the council's Strategic Plan in 2020/21.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 26/05/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		

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Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A None - this is a performance and delivery update		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Proposal for the introduction of a Borough Wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to restrict individuals who ingest, inhale, inject, smoke, possess or otherwise use psychoactive substances (e.g. nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to c	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>The consultation exercise relating to the extension of the responsible drinking Public Spaces Protection Order resulted in a significant number of residents' requesting a variation to the order to include the possession and use of nitrous oxide canisters which is not offence contained within the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.</p> <p>Following initial feedback so far, this proposal has been amended to restrict individuals who ingest, inhale, inject, smoke, possess or otherwise use psychoactive substances (e.g. nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to members of the public.</p> <p>It was not possible to include a variation at the time but as a result of analysis there appears to be an evidence base to consider the introduction of a PSPO. An extensive consultation exercise will follow to determine whether a PSPO including determining the wording of the prohibition is necessary and the</p>		

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	geographical boundaries within the borough to which the PSPO if introduced will apply.
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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	Internally – Public Health, Substance Misuse Services, Neighbourhood Operations and Management. Clean and Green, Parks and Open Spaces, Trading Standards, Town Centre Team, ward councillors. Externally – MOPAC, Police, Safer Neighbourhood Board, Tower Hamlets Homes, Popla Harca and other Registered Providers, Neighbourhood Watch, Ward Panels and residents, London Boroughs of Hackney and Newham, City of London Corporation, third sector providers including Safe East, Spotlight, RESET and Osmani Trust Council's online consultation platform, council's community safety website, ward councillors, ward panels, Neighbourhood Watch 'OWL', Community Safety Newsletter, Bangla e-newsletter		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, will be completed as part of the report		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety) ann.corbett@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	NA		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Approval of the new Intermediate Housing Policy	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This item seeks approval of the new Intermediate Housing Policy which supports the developing Intermediate Housing Register of Interest.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
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Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	Internal and External stakeholders Yes		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes in January 2021		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Una Bedford, Karen Swift Strategy and Policy Officer (Place) Una.Bedford@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration) Karen.Swift@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendix 1: Intermediate Housing Policy 2021 Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment for the Intermediate Housing Policy		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>Planning obligations are legal obligations entered into by the developer in an agreement with the local planning authority under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in order to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.</p> <p>The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides updated guidance on how planning obligations will be secured from new development. Once adopted, this updated SPD will replace the 2016 version.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Social Inclusion

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<p>Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place</p>	<p>The consultation process described above has included consultation with internal service areas, Councillors, interested parties and the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two rounds of internal consultation were undertaken seeking input from key service areas. • A Members workshop was held in June 2020 and a Members briefing was held during the first public consultation (18th May 2020) to update Councillors on the process and consultation timeframes • Two rounds of public consultation were undertaken. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The first consultation commenced on 13th March 2020 and was initially planned to run for six weeks. Due to the disruption resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, this consultation was extended by four weeks and closed on 25th May 2020. o The second consultation commenced on 8th October 2020 and ran for six weeks, finishing on 19th November 2020. • The public consultations included the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Consultation information and documents were published on the Council's consultation website, Let's Talk Tower Hamlets o An email providing details of each consultation was sent to the Local Plan database, Affordable Workspace providers in the borough and those who had asked to be informed of progress o Hard copies of documents were made available for public inspection at the Town Hall o An online Q&A session was held during the second consultation. This was promoted on the Let's Talk Tower Hamlets webpage and to Members o Each consultation period was advertised in the East London Advertiser • Following each public consultation, a consultation statement was prepared summarising the process, feedback received and how the responses have contributed to the final draft of SPD.
<p>Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Planning Obligations SPD will provide guidance on how planning obligations are to be secured from new development, including obligations relating to affordable housing, adaptable and accessible housing and employment and upskilling of local people.</p> <p>Following two rounds of public consultation on the draft Planning Obligations SPD this Quality Assurance checklist has been reviewed and updated. No additional equalities concerns were raised during this process. The Planning Obligations SPD provides further detail and guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies and as such is considered to be accordance with the Local Plan Integrated Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Based on the Qualities Assurance Checklist a full Equalities Assessment will not be undertaken as due regard to the nine protected groups is embedded in the proposal and the proposal is considered to have low relevance to equalities.</p>
<p>Contact details for comments or additional information</p>	<p>Lindsey Gibson, Nicole Layton, Matthew Pullen, melissa spearman (Executive Support Relationship Manager) lindsey.gibson@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Executive Support Team Leader, Place Nicole.Layton@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Infrastructure Planning Manager) matthew.pullen@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Planning & Building Control Melissa.Spearman@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p>

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What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Final Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Statement Quality Assurance Checklist Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Contracts Forward Plan 2020/21 – Quarter Four	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This report presents THE contracts being procured during quarter 4. The report also sets out the Contracts Forward Plan at Appendix 1 to the report. 2. The report asks for confirmation that all contracts can proceed to contract award after tender.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	As above Necessary consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the council's policies and procedures. Where required, consultation with service users and stakeholders will be undertaken as part of the project and budget approval process.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No. Contact specific EQIA is expected to be completed by respective contract owners as part of the Directorate approval.		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Kevin Bartle (Interim Corporate Director, Resources) Kevin.Bartle@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Report and appendices include details of all contracts to be awarded		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so	No, Unrestricted		

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why?			
Title of Report	Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-2024	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This item provides an overview of Tower Hamlets Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2021-2024. The CSP Plan presents the Community Safety Partnership's approach and priorities to achieving a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour in Tower Hamlets up to 2023.</p> <p>The new CSP plan is supported by a comprehensive strategic assessment that draws on data from across the partnership to identify trends, patterns, and drivers relating to crime and anti-social behaviour. It has also been informed by extensive consultation and engagement with partners across the system, with community groups, and with Tower Hamlets residents.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Council 17/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Community Safety Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement process to collect resident and community safety partners feedback to the development of the plans key priority areas • 8 week formal consultation process on the proposed plan/identified priority areas 		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Ann Corbett (Divisional Director, Community Safety) ann.corbett@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Idea Stores Post Consultation Report	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes

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Summary of Decision	This report gives information and results from the public consultation on Idea Stores and asks for a decision to be made on the possible changes to this service discussed in the public consultation.
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Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>During consultation this included The Public Key Partners Staff Politicians</p> <p>Post consultation we will engage with the asset management team.</p> <p>A public consultation has been undertaken via the consultation hub. This has been publicised through multiple channels and throughout the life of the consultation. Those without internet access were able to complete this over the phone. Two Focus Groups were also arranged (online due to Covid Restrictions)</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes. An initial one was done prior to public consultation and a revised one will be done following. It will be a key appendix to the report		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Teresa Heaney (Interim Customer Services Programme Director) teresa.heaney@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	EqIA Statistical and Demographic Analysis		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision at Ben Jonson School'	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	As part of the Borough SEN Strategy and Implementation Plan for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Primary provision, Bowden House Special School		

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and Ben Jonson Primary Schools have formed a partnership to jointly run a Social Emotional Mental Health provision, on the Ben Jonson site. This partnership would enhance the educational offer for both schools and benefit all Tower Hamlets children with SEMH needs.

This report presents the outcome of the stage one consultation, and the public representations received in response to the statutory Notice on the proposal to establish a 12 place Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision at Ben Jonson School from September 2021

It also presents the outcome of the public representation received in response to the statutory notice on the proposal for a prescribed alteration to Bowden House School and Ben Jonson School, to establish a 12 place Special Educational Needs provision from September 2021.

The report explains the background and reasons for the proposals; the links with the possible closure of Cherry Trees School. It details the consultations undertaken; the responses received with the views of parents, pupils, staff and the general public. It recommends for the Mayor in Cabinet to consider the decision on whether or not the council should agree the proposal and formally proceed with plans to establish a 12 place Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision at Ben Jonson School from 1st September 2021, and the prescribed alteration to Bowden House School, to establish a 12 place co-educational, primary, non-residential, Special Educational Needs provision from September 2021 on the Ben Jonson site. The two provisions will be integrated.

The report will include equalities impact assessment; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>The following stakeholders have been invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, community groups, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union, local Members of Parliament.</p> <p>Stage one public consultation commenced in Summer 2020 with the publication and consultation on the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) implementation plan, and the consultation on the proposal for the closure of Cherry Trees which included consultation with all parents, and staff who are currently working with pupils likely to be transferred to the Ben Jonson SEMH provision. Feedback from these consultations has informed this report to cabinet and the recommendation herein.</p>

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	Ben Jonson school governors undertook a further four week period of statutory consultation from 7 January 2021 to 4 February 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders were given an opportunity to send objections or comments to the school.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	James Thomas (Corporate Director, Children and Culture) James.Thomas1@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEMH Strategy for meeting Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs for Primary Age Children in Tower Hamlets • The Cherry Trees School Closure (1st stage consultation) • Statutory Public Notices • Public Consultation Paper (1st stage consultation) • Analysis of the Responses to the Statutory Public Notices 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Budget monitoring report 2020-21 as at 31st December 2020 (period 9)	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	Budget monitoring report 2020-21 as at 31st December 2020 (period 9)		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	N/A N/A
Has an Equality Impact	N/A

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Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	
Contact details for comments or additional information	Hitesh Jolapara (Interim Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit) hitesh.jolapara@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted
Title of Report	Determination of Limehouse Neighbourhood Forum Application
	Ward Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers
	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	Neighbourhood forum designations expire five years after they are initially granted. The designation of the Limehouse Community Forum as the neighbourhood forum for the Limehouse Neighbourhood Planning Area therefore expired on 1 December 2020. The Forum has submitted an application to be re-designated. This report assesses the application against the relevant legislation and guidance.

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Social Inclusion
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	All people who have asked to be added to the planning policy database have been sent an email regarding the consultation; all local councillors have also been contacted. A public notice has been placed in the East End Advertiser to reach further stakeholders. A public consultation is taking place between 3 December 2020 and 27 January 2021. This is beyond the statutorily required six weeks, to account for the holiday period. There is a statutory timeframe which means a decision on the designation must be made within 13 weeks of the consultation beginning. Because of this, and the internal Tower Hamlets reporting timeframes, it is not possible to wait until the consultation has finished to bring this issue to DLT. At the DLT stage, this report therefore recommends that the decision be moved to the next stage of reporting, and that the final decision will be conditional on an assessment of the consultation responses. The CLT report will provide more

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	detail on consultation responses, and the MAB and CAB reports will be accompanied by a consultation statement as an appendix.		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Screening Tool carried out 10/12, no further assessment needed		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Steven Heywood, Jennifer Peters, Marissa Ryan-Hernandez (Planning Officer, Plan Making Team) Tel: 020 7364 4474 Steven.Heywood@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Planning and Building Control, Place) Jennifer.Peters@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Plan Making Team Leader)		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Appendix 1: Limehouse Community Forum Application Form Appendix 2: Limehouse Neighbourhood Area Map Appendix 3: Limehouse Community Forum Constitution Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Appendix 5: Consultation Statement (to be appended from MAB onwards)		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Determination of Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum Application	Ward Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	Neighbourhood forum designations expire five years after they are initially granted. The Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum designation is therefore due to expire on 5 April 2021. The Forum has submitted an application for the designation to be renewed. This report assesses the application against the relevant legislation and guidance.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 03/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning, Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Social Inclusion
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	All people who have asked to be added to the planning policy database have been sent an email regarding the consultation; all local councillors have also been contacted. A public notice has been placed in the East End Advertiser to reach further stakeholders. A public consultation is taking place between 3 December 2020 and 22 January 2021. This is beyond the statutorily required six weeks, to account for the

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	<p>holiday period. There is a statutory timeframe which means a decision on the designation must be made within 13 weeks of the consultation beginning. Because of this, and the internal Tower Hamlets reporting timeframes, it is not possible to wait until the consultation has finished to bring this issue to DLT. At the DLT stage, this report therefore recommends that the decision be moved to the next stage of reporting, and that the final decision will be conditional on an assessment of the consultation responses. The CLT report will provide more detail on consultation responses, and the MAB and CAB reports will be accompanied by a consultation statement as an appendix.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Screening Tool carried out 10/12, no further assessment needed		
Contact details for comments or additional information	<p>Steven Heywood, Nicole Layton, Jennifer Peters, Marissa Ryan-Hernandez (Planning Officer, Plan Making Team) Tel: 020 7364 4474 Steven.Heywood@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Executive Support Team Leader, Place Nicole.Layton@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Planning and Building Control, Place) Jennifer.Peters@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Plan Making Team Leader)</p>		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<p>Appendix 1: Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum Application Form Appendix 2: Spitalfields Neighbourhood Area Map Appendix 3: Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum Constitution Appendix 4: Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum Standing Orders Appendix 5: Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum Appendices Pack Appendix 6: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Appendix 7: Consultation Statement (to be appended from MAB onwards)</p>		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Bow bus gateway and timed closures exemptions considerations	Ward Bow East; Bow West	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>The proposals for the Bow Liveable Streets project were presented to Cabinet on 25 November 2020, the following notes the decisions made and the purpose of this report.</p> <p>This item presents the considerations and recommendations for an exemption scheme in respect of vehicles belonging to blue badge holders and sets out the options for the operation of the Roman Road bus gateway and Coborn Road timed closure. This includes hours of operation and potential exemptions for local blue badge holders, carers and potentially other local groups</p>		

Decision maker	Cabinet
Date of decision	03/03/21
Community Plan	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in

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Theme			
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Environment, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Job Share) - Lead on Public Realm		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>Public Key Partners Other Directorates</p> <p>Four-week public consultation with the residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the Bow Liveable Streets area.</p> <p>Consultation documents with paper survey were sent out to everyone within the consultation area, as well as hosting a survey online.</p> <p>Queries were responded to via a dedicated email address.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes, an EqIA has been carried out for the project based on the results of the consultation and for this report in regard to the exemption scheme. The EqIA for the Bow project will be updated to reflect the decision of this report and as detailed design progresses.		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Inlia Aziz, Kristina Coxall, Lindsey Gibson, Chris Harrison, Nicole Layton (Assistant to Chief Executive's PA) inlia.aziz@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Project Centre Kristina.Coxall@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Executive Support Relationship Manager) lindsey.gibson@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Liveable Streets Technical Director) Chris.Harrison@towerhamlets.gov.uk, Executive Support Team Leader, Place Nicole.Layton@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Liveable Streets Bow Cabinet report, 25 November 2020		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Strategic Plan 2021-24	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	To approve the Council's Strategic Plan for 2021-24		

Decision maker	Cabinet
Date of decision	28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities
Cabinet Member	Mayor

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Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None None
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Draft 2021-24 Strategic Plan
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted
Title of Report	Future of the Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Designation
	Ward Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers; Whitechapel
	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	To consider the future of the current Private Rented Sector Housing Selective Licensing Scheme within the pre 2014 wards of Weavers, Whitechapel, Spitalfields and Banglatown in light of its achievements to date, an independent review of the Scheme and the subsequent wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	A public consultation with landlords, renters, letting agents, blue light services, Members Statutory consultation completed
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this	Yes

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Assessment?			
Contact details for comments or additional information	Dan Jones, David Tolley (Divisional Director, Public Realm) dan.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards) david.tolley@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	N/A		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Report on outcome of the stage one consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report presents the outcome of the stage one public consultation on the proposal for the amalgamation of Harry Roberts Nursery and Ben Jonson Primary School, to establish a three form entry 3-11 primary school, with 60 FTE Nursery, from January 2022.</p> <p>The report explains the background and reasons for the stage one consultation; the responses received with the views of parents, pupils, staff and the general public. Its purpose is to enable the Mayor in cabinet to decide whether or not the council should proceed to stage two of the process, which would be to issue a formal statutory notice informing of the intention for the two schools to amalgamate by 1 April 2022.</p> <p>The report includes a summary of representations received and any responses made; risk and opportunities; officer's recommendations; decisions available to the Mayor in Cabinet.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 28/04/21
Community Plan Theme	TH Plan 1: A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	The following stakeholders have been invited to make representations: Parents and carers, students, Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, Council of Mosques, Head Teachers, school staff, school governors, community groups, neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Education Union, local

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	<p>Members of Parliament.</p> <p>Following the decision by DLT on 25 January 2021, a stage one public consultation was held between February and March 2021, the feedback from this has informed this report to cabinet and the recommendations herein. If a decision to publish a statutory notice and proposal is taken by cabinet, there is a statutory requirement for a further four week period of representation. This would run from June 2021 to July 2021. During this statutory consultation period all interested stakeholders will have the opportunity to send objections or comments to the council.</p>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	Yes		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Christine McInnes (Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships) christine.mcinnnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one consultation feedback • Equalities Impact Assessment • Stage one consultation document and response form • Council's Schools HR Organisational Change Procedure • Draft Statutory Notice 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Action Plan in response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 'Review of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Response to COVID-19'	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report sets out current progress with regards to actions set out following the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 'Review of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Response to COVID-19		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities
Cabinet Member	Mayor
Who will be consulted	None

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before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Review of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Response to COVID-19 – September 2020 • Review of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Response to COVID-19 Action Plan 		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Council Buildings Leased to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	<p>This report proposes clarification of and revisions to the policy statement agreed at Cabinet in March 2018, 'Council Buildings Leased to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations - Statement of Policy and Procedures'. The revised Statement includes a defined list of council owned premises that are considered to be the 'Community Premises Portfolio and clarifies the council's approach to leasing premises and eligibility for Community Benefit Rent Reduction for faith-based activity and for early years settings. The report also considers the financial arrangements for CBRR.</p>		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	<p>All Directorates VCS organisations via VCS networks VCS tenants</p> <p>VCS organisations and other stakeholders will be consulted via online meetings and questionnaire</p>

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Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No, to be completed		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Vicky Clark, Sharon Godman (Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development) vicky.clark@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Approval of extra spend on existing Northgate contract to bring customer and service benefits	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report will request that the Mayor in Cabinet approve the extra procurement required on the current contract with Northgate to provide digital solutions enabling housing outcomes. The financial value of the current contract exceeds procurement threshold for delegated decisions.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None None
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	N/A
Contact details for comments or additional	Adrian Gorst, Karen Swift (Divisional Director, IT) adrian.gorst@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director,

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information	Housing and Regeneration) Karen.Swift@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Community Hubs	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	This report sets out proposals for the further development of the council buildings designated as community hubs. The development plans set out in the report chart a consultation and community involvement process to take the hubs from direct management by the council or its appointed agents to community based management arrangements.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Social Inclusion (Job Share) - Lead on Planning, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	All Directorates VCS organisations via VCS networks VCS tenants VCS organisations and other stakeholders will be consulted via online meetings and questionnaire
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No, to be completed
Contact details for comments or additional information	Vicky Clark, Sharon Godman (Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development) vicky.clark@towerhamlets.gov.uk, (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	None
Is there an intention to consider this report in	No, Unrestricted

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private session and if so why?			
Title of Report	Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission Report	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report provides the findings and recommendations from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission which undertook evidence gathering between Sept – December 2020		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in		
Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	A range of borough stakeholders The Commission gathered information through witnesses, written submissions and focus groups		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No as this report examines inequalities faced by BAME communities		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Commission evidence gathering sessions		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	Action Plan in Response to the Community Building Scrutiny Challenge Session	Ward All Wards	Key Decision? No
Summary of Decision	This report sets out current progress with regards to actions set out following the community building scrutiny challenge session.		

Decision maker	Cabinet
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Date of decision	24/03/21		
Community Plan Theme	All Priorities		
Cabinet Member	Mayor		
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	None None		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No		
Contact details for comments or additional information	Sharon Godman (Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance) sharon.godman@towerhamlets.gov.uk		
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	A Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2020-23 Community Building Action Report		
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted		
Title of Report	London Dock School – Funding Agreement and Leases	Ward St Katharine's & Wapping	Key Decision? Yes
Summary of Decision	The report informs Cabinet of the position regarding the programme, leases and funding associated with the construction of the London Dock School. It seeks approval for the Council to enter into a funding agreement with the Department for Education and to key terms of the associated leases.		

Decision maker Date of decision	Cabinet 24/03/21
Community Plan Theme	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in
Cabinet Member	Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth Services and Education, Mayor
Who will be consulted before decision is made and how will this consultation take place	All relevant Directorates (Children's Services, Resources and Governance) Internal consultation: Yes

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	External consultation: No
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out and if so the result of this Assessment?	No
Contact details for comments or additional information	Vicky Clark (Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development) vicky.clark@towerhamlets.gov.uk
What supporting documents or other information will be available?	Cabinet, 31 July 2019, Report "Land to the West of Virginia Street - London Dock School".
Is there an intention to consider this report in private session and if so why?	No, Unrestricted

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<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>1 March 2021</p>	 TOWER HAMLETS
<p>Report of: Will Tuckley, Chief Executive</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Strategic performance and delivery reporting – Q3 2020/21</p>	

<p>Originating Officer(s)</p>	<p>Sharon Godman – Divisional Director Strategy, Policy & Performance</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All wards</p>

Summary

The report: Strategic performance and delivery reporting – Q3 2020/21 is going to Cabinet on 3 March 2021, and provides an update on the delivery and implementation of the council’s Strategic Plan throughout 2019/20

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. To note the Quarter 3 summary status, performance of the strategic measures at the end of Q3, and to note progress in delivering Strategic Plan activities.
2. Consider areas of concern (e.g. poor performance) in developing per-decision scrutiny questions

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<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>1 March 2021</p>	
<p>Report of: Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Budget monitoring report 2020-21 as at 31st December 2020 (period 9)</p>	

<p>Originating Officer(s)</p>	<p>Kevin Bartle, Interim Corporate Director - Resources</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All wards</p>

Summary

The Budget monitoring report is going to Cabinet on 3 March 2021 and provides an update of the provisional outturn position at the end of 2020.

The regular reporting of Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring information through the year and the preparation of the provisional outturn position after the year end provides detailed financial information on the financial performance of the Council.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. To note the Council's projected outturn position for the end of 2020; and
2. Consider areas of concern (e.g. revenue overspends) in developing per-decision scrutiny questions

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<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>01 March 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Denise Radley, Corporate Director Health Adults & Community</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Spotlight on Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-2024</p>	

<p>Originating Officer(s)</p>	<p>Filuck Miah, Corporate Strategy and Policy</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All wards</p>

Summary

This cover report accompanies the presentation slide deck: Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2021-24 – To follow.

The contents of the slide deck includes:

CSP Plan 2021-24

- Overall approach (including its six principles) to tackle crime and disorder and how it addresses the root causes.
- Development and formulation of the Plan
- Priorities for the next three years
- Outlines drivers of local crime and underlying issues
- How the plan will be delivered

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Review the accompanying presentation in order to inform discussion for this item at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

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Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021- 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1st March
2021



Introduction from Cllr Islam



Community Safety Partnerships are required under the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) to ensure a strategic plan is in place to address crime and disorder locally.

The current plan ends on 31st March 2021, and a new plan has been developed for 2021-2024.

The plan presents the CSP priorities, and approach to tackling crime and disorder in Tower Hamlets considering the context, challenges and opportunities we face. The Plan also outlines the Partnership's delivery mechanisms including key projects and subgroups.

CSP Plan has been developed against a socio-economic background that includes impacts of the Covid 19 Pandemic and a spotlight on inequalities and discrimination highlighted by the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement.



How we developed the plan

Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment

- The plan is supported by a **detailed strategic assessment** that draws on data from across the partnership to identify trends, patterns, and drivers of crime and anti-social behaviour. The production of this Strategic Assessment is a **statutory requirement** under the Police and Justice Act 2006. It replaces the previous requirement to carry an audit every three years by the need to be more responsive to changing situations through annual assessments of the direction of strategic work.

4 Stakeholder Steering Groups

- **Four steering group meetings with CSP organisations** were held throughout the plans development. These reviewed achievements and remaining challenges from the previous plan, and discussed new priority areas, what the “big ticket” areas are, what is out of scope, areas the strategic assessment didn’t cover

Consultation and Engagement

- The plan is also informed by a **wide-ranging consultation and engagement** with **partners** that was carried out over July-December, and with **community groups and Tower Hamlets residents**



What residents told us

- ASB is the number one concern of residents, significantly more so than crime
- Visible drug use and drug dealing (including Nitrous Oxide) were the main ASB concerns
- Noise nuisance is a key concern. Groups of youths coming into their local area and congregating late into the night, often driving cars dangerously and revving engines loudly
- Rough sleeping in the borough is an issue people want reduced
- Earlier intervention needed to help prevent young people being exploited and to prevent them becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol



Addressing the Drivers of Crime and Underlying Factors that Affect Crime and Disorder



Drugs

- We know that a substantial proportion of local crime is driven by substance misuse and an active drugs market: contributing to acquisitive crimes and serious violent offending. Consideration of Tower Hamlets' drugs market will be a cross-cutting theme across our strategic priorities and partners will work in partnership to address both substance misuse through treatment and disrupting drug markets through enforcement activity.

Mental Health

- Some of those in contact with the criminal justice system suffer from mental health problems, with people particularly at risk during and after contact with criminal justice system. By identifying and addressing mental ill health at the earliest opportunity we can aim for the best outcomes for those people experiencing mental health issues and provide holistic support for people with complex and challenging needs.

Social Integration

- A thriving, cohesive and well-integrated community can help to reduce the risk of hate crime and the risk of extremism taking root. The Council and relevant partners will continue to monitor community tensions and promote social integration to encourage an environment where people of all backgrounds come together as one community. Our Community Cohesion Plan 2020-2025 sets out our priorities and commitments to strengthen cohesion in the borough.



Principles That Will be a Feature Throughout the New Plan

Early Help and Prevention

Focus on early intervention and prevention, and the wider determinants of crime and community safety, including social inequalities, employment, skills, health, housing and environment

Public Health approach to violence

Focus on defining and measuring the issues contributing to violent offending and making use of existing resources, available funding and innovative projects to tackle it

Contextual safeguarding

Focus on contextual safeguarding, taking a whole-family approach and accounting for every context and environment that adolescents encounter beyond their family. This involves adopting a trauma informed approach, using a local understanding of the impact of adverse childhood experiences have on involvement in crime and ASB

Resident involvement:

coproducing solutions with our local community to understand local priorities and develop an approach that is responsive and effective in increasing feelings of safety.

Collaboration:

Share data and intelligence and work across agencies to facilitate an efficient and effective approach and better targeted interventions.

Supporting victims:

Ensure a focus on victims and strengthen local systems to support victims, reduce repeat victimisation, and recognise that perpetrators of violence can often be victims too.



Priorities in the new CSP Plan 2021-24



The plan sets out 4 key strategic priorities that aim to address CSP partner outcomes as well as the Council's Outcome 7. We hope that, by addressing these priorities, we will improve confidence and trust in policing and the CSP

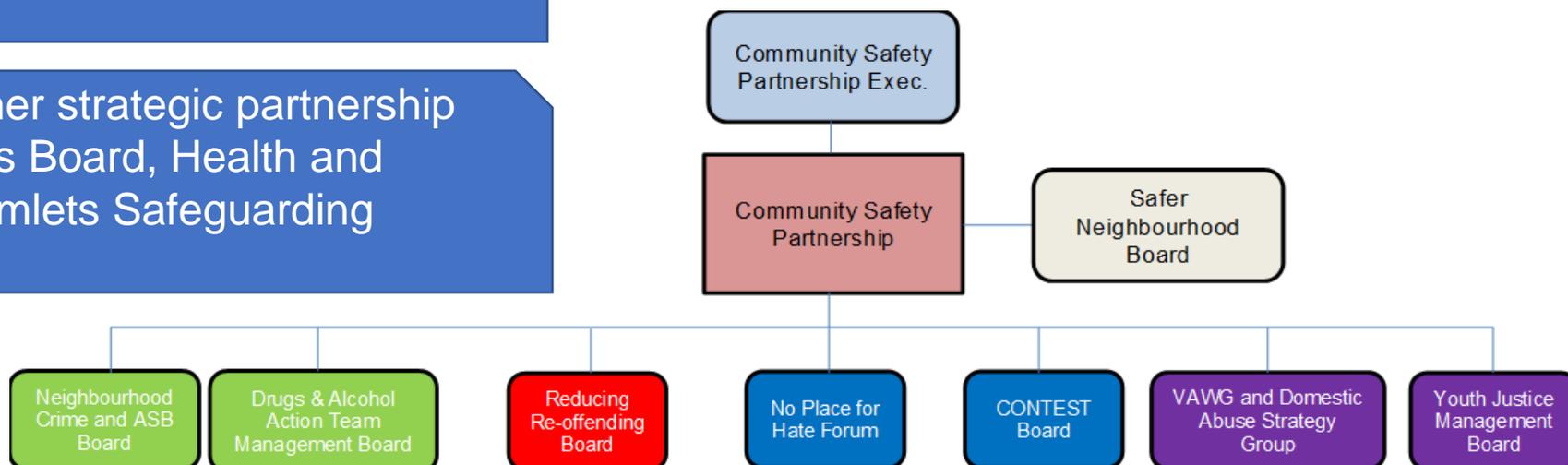


How the Plan will be delivered

The CSP has 7 strategic subgroups to drive the operational delivery

In Tower Hamlets, the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) operates alongside our CSP so that our local community is considered and can contribute when making strategic decisions

The CSP works closely with other strategic partnership boards: the Safeguarding Adults Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP)



What difference will the plan make for residents



Will tackle crime, anti-social behavior, substance misuse and re-offending. It will also address the London Mayor's strategic priorities whilst reducing fear of crime, improving community cohesion and contributing to relevant community plan commitments.

The plan incorporates the Mayor of London's 'Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing Action Plan' principles around better use of police powers, working together to make BAME communities safer

Help to reduce environmental crime related anti-social behavior. The plan will look to address criminal damage, graffiti, fly-tipping, fly-posting and other environmental crimes in the borough. Nitrous Oxide PSPO will reduce visible canisters

Tackle and prevent harm and exploitation of all kind

Effective prevention will reduce the likelihood of young people becoming involved in gangs, group offending, carrying knives and otherwise becoming involved in the criminal justice system

Disruption and targeted action against the highest harm serious and organised criminals and networks in Tower Hamlets.



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Non-Executive Report of the: Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 March 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Sharon Godman Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance	Classification: Unrestricted
Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: Examining the Council's Revised Approach for Idea Stores and Library Services	

Originating Officer(s)	Filuck Miah Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
Wards affected	All (All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report submits the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Challenge Session which examined the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services and makes a number of recommendations for consideration.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the attached Idea Stores and Library Services Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and agree the recommendations; and
2. Agree to submit the attached report to the Mayor and Cabinet for executive response.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This paper submits the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources for consideration by OSC.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the scrutiny challenge session provides a number of recommendations on the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services for the council to consider and take forward.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets carried out its public consultation (Nov 2020 – Jan 2021) on the revised approach to Idea Stores and library services. This consultation considers two options:
- Option 1:**
To reduce hours by 54% at Watney Market Idea Store and 70% Bethnal Green and close down Cubitt Town Library and reduce some evening hours including Sundays at the remainder Idea Stores
- Option 2:**
To close Watney Market, Bethnal Green Library and Cubitt Town Library and keep the remaining Idea Stores operating as they are.
- 3.2 The consultation further sets out its case for change i.e. to make savings of £1 Million (£400k set against current MTFs and £600k new savings) and it also presents an outline of the council's five-year vision for the future of Idea Stores and library services.
- 3.3 OSC wanted to examine and understand how the council's proposal for change would impact on service users and residents that use the Idea Stores and library services. They also wanted to understand how the council's five-year vision will take shape and be delivered.
- 3.4 The Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources, Cllr Leema Qureshi decided to hold a Finance and Resource Scrutiny Challenge Session with the focus: Examining the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services
- 3.5 The Challenge Session was underpinned by the further core questions:
- To what extent of change will the revised approach for Idea Stores and library services impact on user groups from the community? What are the planned mitigation options and what's the evidence from users and residents?
 - Based on the public engagement and residents, views what can we learn and take forward or change about the suggested proposals for the revised approach to Idea Stores and library services?
 - What is the five-year vision for the future for the future of the Idea Stores and library services including future funding proposals and risk implications?
- 3.6 The Challenge Session was held virtually on 28 January 2021 - chaired by Councillor Leema Qureshi (Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources). The session was structured that included: Chair's overview - reason for the enquiry and session outcome, presentation from the service led by Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit supported by council officers, Scrutiny Committee discussion, Youth Council representatives provided service user feedback, Voluntary Sectors Children and Youth Forum Coordinator provided an external perspective from the voluntary sector usage.

- 3.7 The Challenge Session resulted in the development of a number of recommendations:

Recommendations on five-year vision

Recommendation 1

The council to provide more comprehensive information on its five-year vision for the future of Idea Stores and library Services and needs to include a full review of staffing levels to maintain services; to publish further detailed information on the future site use of Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library. It needs to examine how library services can be supplemented with other Council services and further consult residents on how proposed reduction of hours will be tailored to meet local demand.

Recommendation 2

The council, to revisit its proposed plan on the Isle of Dogs library service situation, in particular to consider the merits of deprioritising Canary Wharf (as this is subject to future closure) and free up resources to sustain Cubitt Town Library Service in the interim until such time a new alternative site is opened.

Recommendations on Impact

Recommendation 3

The council, to review and bring up to date its Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for All Idea Stores and library services to help better comprehend the impact on protected characteristic groups.

Recommendation 4

To further undertake comprehensive risk assessments to help better understand the impact of change on wider determinants including delayed recovery and continuation of the pandemic, impact on footfall and local economy, increase in demand user groups, impact on children and young people's educational outcomes, level of social deprivation, poverty, social isolation, crime and antisocial behaviour and community tension/ cohesion.

Recommendation 5

The council, to review the usage of Idea Stores and library services space so that youth hubs can offer dedicated spaces for children and young people to use for their education and social connection needs.

Recommendations on Finance and Resources

Recommendation 6

The council, to investigate and publish the results into the research it's undertaken for alternative / external funding streams and to further include a review of its application of fund streams such as Public Health or New Homes Bonus (earmarked for reserves), that could be aligned to a longer consultation period for examining the future delivery model of Idea Stores and library services whilst undertaking further assessments on the geography of sites being considered along with the economic impact on people.

Recommendation 7

The council, to investigate and publish its results on how it can develop revenue streams from commercialisation of the Idea Stores and library services physical premises and its digitalisation agenda to offset some of the savings requirements and future proof the sustainability of Idea Stores and library services.

Recommendation 8

The council, to market and publicise the commercialisation opportunities of the Idea Stores and library services (using its communication channels and advertising space) and to further include engagement with different media groups such as Bangladeshi Language Media, Social Media Influencers and others to help it achieve a wider reach for business opportunities and revenue growth.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Challenge Session reviewed EqIA to ensure the consultation and focus groups met the equality duty on protected characteristics and mitigated any impact on community cohesion. The Scrutiny Committee recommended for the EqIA to be updated with more current borough profile information.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.
- 6.2 Any costs arising from the implementation of the recommendations from the Revised Approach for Idea Store and Library Service Scrutiny Challenge Session Report will need to be contained within the existing service budget or considered as part of the council's Medium Term Financial

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires local authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons.
- 7.2 Where a local authority proposes changes to the provision of library services, it has a duty to consult all persons who are likely to be affected by such changes (*Draper v Lincolnshire County Council* [2015] EWHC 2964 (Admin)).
- 7.3 As part of the council's duty to consult, the council must communicate any changes from the challenge session implemented into the proposed changes already shared with residents, people affected and/or service users.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- NONE

Appendices

- Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: Examining the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report
- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Filuck Miah - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate

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Finance and Resources Scrutiny Challenge Session

Examining the Council's Revised Approach for Idea Stores and Library Services

01/03/2021

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Chair's Foreword

Public libraries like the Idea Stores and library services that we have in Tower Hamlets are vital to the wellbeing of individuals and communities. They are trusted spaces, free to enter and open to all. People are able to explore and share reading, information and ideas, knowledge and culture. They support, connect and stimulate people in many ways. They are well valued by residents, often polling in the top tier of resident satisfaction within the council's Annual Resident Survey and are an integral part of the local public services infrastructure.

The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act required all English and Welsh Councils to have a statutory duty to provide 'comprehensive and efficient' library services. When drawing up and delivering Library strategies and plans¹, councils are expected to consider their legal obligations under Equality Act 2010, Best Value Duty 2011 guidance, Localism Act 2011 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Like many councils across the country, Tower Hamlets is no exception and is facing challenges on many fronts including the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and continued austerity measures. These challenges have led the council needing to make savings across many of its services.

As the Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources portfolio, I am pleased to present this report that examines the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services. The report enables scrutiny to contribute the consultation process and bring about positive change. The report makes a number of recommendations for the council to consider and put into action.

The Challenge Session heard from the Customer Service team (who are responsible for the Idea Stores and library services), Members of the Youth Council and the Voluntary Sector's Children and Young People's Forum Coordinator on the initial findings of the consultation, approach for the five-year vision and the likely impact of the council's proposal for savings.

I'd like to thank following people who contributed to this challenge session:

- Alex Nelson from Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets who provided an account of the voluntary sector in particular the children and young people perspective.
- Youth Council Members Saarah Rahman and Ahmed Duale (service user input)
- Councillor Sabina Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Environment, and team of council officers who provided an overview of the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services and responded to scrutiny questions
- My scrutiny colleagues who supported the discussion and helped to form some of the recommendations being put forward.

Councillor Leema Qureshi

Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resources



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-libraries-as-a-statutory-service/libraries-as-a-statutory-service>

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations on Five-Year Vision

1	The council to provide more comprehensive information on its five-year vision for the future of Idea Stores and library services. This needs to include a full review of staffing levels to maintain services and publish further detailed information on the future site use of Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library. It needs to examine how library services can be supplemented by other council services and further consult residents on how proposed reduction of hours will be tailored to meet local demand.
2	The council to revisit its proposed plan for the Isle of Dogs library service and consider the merits of deprioritising Canary Wharf (as this is subject to future closure) to free up resources to sustain Cubitt Town Library Service in the interim until such time a new alternative site is opened.

Recommendations on Impact

3	The council to review and bring up to date its Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for all Idea Stores and library services to help comprehend the impact on protected characteristic groups.
4	To further undertake comprehensive risk assessments to help understand the impact of change on wider determinants including; delayed recovery and continuation of the pandemic, impact on footfall and local economy, increase in demand user groups, impact on children and young people's educational outcomes, level of social deprivation, poverty, social isolation, crime and antisocial behaviour and community tension/ cohesion.
5	The council to review the use of Idea Stores and library service's spaces so that youth hubs can offer dedicated spaces for children and young people to use for their education and social connection needs.

Recommendations on Finance & Resource

6	The council to investigate and publish the results into the research it's undertaken for alternative / external funding streams. This must include a review of its application of fund streams such as Public Health or New Homes Bonus (earmarked for reserves), that could be aligned to a longer consultation period for examining the future delivery model of Idea Stores and library services whilst undertaking further assessments on the geography of sites being considered along with the economic impact on people.
7	The council to investigate and publish results of how it can develop revenue streams from commercialisation of the Idea Stores and library service's physical premises and its digitalisation agenda to offset some of the savings requirements

	and future proof the sustainability of Idea Stores and library services.
8	The council to market and publicise the commercialisation of the Idea Stores and library services (using its communication channels and advertising space) and to include engagement with different media groups including Bangladeshi Language Media, Social Media Influencers and others to help it achieve a wider reach for business opportunities and revenue growth.

Introduction

1.1 The Idea Stores and library services has been around for almost two decades. It is a well-established educational community provision funded by the council and offers a range of facilities including library services and adult education courses. Pre COVID-19, the service is highly valued² with over 2,000,00 physical visits and 2,000,000 hits for online services and resident satisfaction is on par with the best libraries in the country. Libraries should be seen as genuinely integral to the delivery of your council's broader corporate strategies.

1.2 The first Idea Stores was opened in Bow in 2002, followed by four further branches between 2004-2013 including Chrisp Street, Whitechapel, Canary Wharf, Watney Market. Tower Hamlets also had two traditional library services, namely Bethnal Green and Cubitt Town.

1.3 The Idea Stores and library services also features within the council's Strategic Plan 2020-23³ and contributes to the Mayoral priorities:

Priority 1: People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities.

Outcome 1: People can access a range of education, training and employment opportunities

Priority 3: A dynamic outcome-based council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough.

Outcome 9. People say we are open and transparent putting residents at the heart of everything we do.

1.4 The 2014 Independent Library Report for England⁴ further denotes that libraries contribute to seven outcomes that are critical to individuals and communities, including; cultural and creative enrichment, increased reading and literacy, improved digital access and literacy, helping everyone to achieve their full potential, healthier and happier lives, greater prosperity, and stronger, more resilient communities.

1.5 Whilst the 2010 government's austerity measures are still felt, COVID-19 has exacerbated the financial pressures faced by the local authority. The Idea Stores and library service has been asked to make savings £600k (plus £400k carried forward 2019-20) through its revised approach for Idea Stores and library service.

1.6 The council held a three months public consultation and it proposed two options for a revised approach to Idea Stores and library services alongside an outline of its five-year vision⁵.

Option 1: Close down Cubitt Town Library and significantly reduce hours for Watney Market Idea Store / Bethnal Green Library and reduce some hours (evenings and Sundays) at the remaining Idea Stores.

Option 2: Close down Cubitt Town Library, Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library and keep the remaining Idea Stores as they are.

² https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/2019_ARS_Briefing_Paper.pdf

³ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_plan/strategic_plan.aspx

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388989/Independent_Library_Report-18_December.pdf

⁵ <http://democracy-internal.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s174577/6.2%20Revised%20Approach%20to%20Ideas%20Stores%20Service.pdf>

Reason for Enquiry

- 2.1 The reason for this enquiry is that scrutiny is concerned about the potential negative impact on service users and the community resulting from the implementation of the Council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library service.
- 2.2 Scrutiny wanted to examine how the Council's proposal for a revised approach to Idea Stores and library services will impact the borough's inequality issues, its level of inclusiveness in providing access to children and young people with their educational needs and social mobility, support access for the unemployed, impact of increased social isolation for the elderly and the broader social deprivation, poverty and community cohesion issues.
- 2.3 The revised approach to Idea Stores and library services was set out as part of the Council's public consultation which took place from 30 November 2020 – 29 January 2021. Apart from understanding the insights captured from the public engagement, this was an opportunity for scrutiny and non-executive Councillors to engage with the live consultation and shape the proposals for the revised approach to Idea Stores and library services.

Methodology

- 3.1 The Challenge Session scope was framed to examine the council's revised approach to Idea Stores and library services and sought to understand:
- The extent of change and impact on service user groups resulting from the proposed approach for Idea Stores and library services. Its mitigation options and the evidence from service users and residents.
 - Insights captured from the public engagement
 - The council's five-year vision on the future of Idea Stores and library services including how it will be funded and the risks.
- 3.2 The Session invited Youth Council Members to provide a service user perspective on the topic and the voluntary sector to provide an account of the impact on key user groups as a result of proposed changes to Idea Stores and library services.
- 3.3 In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this Finance and Resources Scrutiny Challenge Session adopted a virtual Microsoft Teams delivery in order to satisfy the Government's compliance requirements for social distancing.
- 3.4 The challenge session, chaired by Councillor Leema Qureshi, Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resource, took place on Thursday 28 January 2021 from 6pm to 8pm

The session followed a structure that included:

- Chair's overview, reason for the enquiry and session outcome.
- Presentation from the service led by Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit
- Committee discussion and lines of enquiry
- Youth Council user feedback and input from the voluntary sector for children and young people
- Scrutiny Committee discussion/ recommendations
- Chair's closing comments and next steps.

3.5 Members in Attendance

Councillor Leema Qureshi	Scrutiny Lead for Finance and Resource (Session Chair)/ OSC Member
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit
Councillor James King	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair
Councillor Bex White	Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Children and Education Sub-Committee
Councillor Gabriela Salva-Macallan	Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	Scrutiny Lead and Chair for Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Councillor Denise Jones	OSC Member
Councillor Marc Francis	OSC Member
Halima Islam	OSC Member
Councillor Shad Chowdhury	Non-executive Councillor

Evidence received from officers, users, and experts:

Teresa Heaney	Interim Divisional Director Customer Services, LBTH
Sergio Dogliani	Head of Local Presence, LBTH
Alex Nelson	Voluntary Sector Children and Youth Forum Coordinator
Saarah Rahman	Youth Cabinet Member (Chair of Tower Hamlets Youth Council)
Ahmed Duale	Youth Cabinet Member (Deputy Mayor Physical Social Environment)

The Challenge Session was supported by:

Filuck Miah	Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
Onyekachi Ajisafe	Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate

Key Findings and Recommendations

Recommendations on Five -Year Vision

Recommendation 1

The council to provide more comprehensive information on its five-year vision for the future of Idea Stores and library services. This needs to include a full review of staffing levels to maintain services and publish further detailed information on the future site use of Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library. It needs to examine how library services can be supplemented by other council services and further consult residents on how proposed reduction of hours will be tailored to meet local demand.

- 4.1 However, the Scrutiny Committee were concerned that the council's vision lacked detail or clarity. Scrutiny Committee Members believed that the vision should be framed as an integral part of the public consultation. They felt that there was no indication that there had been any in-depth consultation on the council's five-year vision itself.
- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from the council's Waste and Recycling Services alongside Resource London (part of London Waste and Recycling Board).
- 4.2 The revised approach and the five-year vision raised further Scrutiny Committee questions, in particular those libraries which were in scope for significant change. Scrutiny Members are concerned about the proposal for reducing the service hours quite significantly for Watney Market Idea Store (54%) and Bethnal Green Library (70%), with Cubitt Town Library being closed down permanently. Both Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library are being used to provide COVID-19 assistance, but these libraries are also situated in densely populated areas of the borough.
- 4.3 The Scrutiny Committee suspect that the cutbacks in service hours for Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library will prepare the way for closure in the next few years. They also questioned if there are any plans to repurpose the building when it's not in use as an Idea Store. The Scrutiny Committee believe that the significant cutbacks in service hours for the Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green is irresponsible given that residents who go to school would be negatively impacted as they use this key provision to support their statutory education studies. Scrutiny Members also felt that Whitechapel Idea Store, which would be an alternative provision, would be too far for people with children residing in Wapping to travel.
- 4.4 The Scrutiny Committee's view is that the council needs to examine the cut-back in-service hours and if they are to pursue the proposed cutbacks in service hours then they should re-consult residents for the different location on how the proposed change in hours will be tailored to meet local demand. They also questioned if there are any Big Lottery Fund (provided £2Million) conditions attached to Watney Market Idea Store usage. Council officers commented that their understanding is that it is to be used for public and community services in line with the council's asset strategy for spaces.
- 4.5 The Cabinet Member acknowledged that Watney Market Idea Store is a well-used service and that the locals value its contribution to the local area, particularly the children sessions delivered from there. Whilst the change is 'drastic', the Cabinet Member's view is that the council's track record in delivering services and on reflection from the initial consultation findings will enable service hours to be adapted to accommodate peak demand, particularly access for parents and children. The council makes the point the

Watney Market Idea Store does not deliver adult learning courses, therefore reducing hours makes more sense to them. However, this posed further Scrutiny Committee questions on how the building could be better supplemented by other Council services to improve efficiencies and achieve better value for money.

- 4.6 Upon reviewing the five-year vision, the Scrutiny Committee questioned the long-term sustainability of both Watney Market Idea Store and Bethnal Green Library as satellite services to other Idea Stores. The Scrutiny Committee were also concerned about the proposed sharing of Whitechapel Idea Store's capacity with the new town hall. As this poses further speculation on whether this change would lead to future closures of these sites given that their capacity has been significantly reduced.
- 4.7 The Scrutiny Committee noted that 35 posts are at risk from this revised approach for Idea Stores and library services, which are integral to the council's savings proposal. The Scrutiny Committee felt that this level of job cuts would lead to a lower quality of service for residents. The Cabinet Member commented that the justification for a reduction in staffing levels was as a result of library services transitioning to self-service machines, online options and the proposed cuts to service hours thus making the current staffing levels excessive. Council officers also commented that the main expenditure for this service are staffing and building costs.
- 4.8 However, the Scrutiny Committee challenged the transactional approach and assumptions to making savings. The Scrutiny Committee have concerns on reducing staffing levels as it was not clear to them on the level the risks for managing capacity i.e. staffing ratio to users accessing the service. Whilst there has been (pre COVID-19) 2,000,000 online visits for services, there has also been 2,000,000 physical site visits as residents and services users access Idea stores and library services for a variety of reasons and will often need the help from staff to guide, provide advice and information and also manage the premises health and safety risks. Reducing staffing levels may also increase certain types of risks, which has been seen when frontline public services such as Transport for London station assistance staff were reduced to make savings, but the risk ratio was so high that the government were obligated to re-recruit people.
- 4.9 The Voluntary and Community Sector's Children and Young People Coordinator also commented that having regular staffing levels accrues tangible benefits as they are considered as trusted adults, positive role models and they look out for individuals when there are safeguarding needs.
- 4.10 Overall, the Scrutiny Committee felt that more needs to happen before the proposed five-year vision could be supported. Scrutiny Members felt that the proposal lacks sufficient information and clarity. They remained concerned about the scale of cutbacks to service hours on two of the services, and decisions taken for the future needs to be based on a solid strategic assessment of needs; risks identified with the proposals; a transition plan for establishing changes; how service quality will be monitored/maintained and contingency plans for intervention and improvements if services fall below expectations.

4.11 Furthermore, the council's five-year vision and its revised approach to the Idea Stores and library services did not indicate that it had fully considered any alternative options for savings:

- Commissioned libraries which could be outsourced to a third-party organisation including social impact bond providers.
- Community run libraries with council support to maintain, or even increase, local library provision while at the same time reducing costs and achieving economic and social objectives through community engagement. However, this option requires the council to have a strong commissioning framework which is in line with how the council will continue to discharge its statutory functions.

Recommendation 2

The council, to revisit its proposed plan for the Isle of Dogs library service situation, in particular to consider the merits of deprioritising Canary Wharf (as this is subject to future closure) and free up resources to sustain Cubitt Town Library Service in the interim until such time a new alternative site is opened.

5.1 The Scrutiny Committee were concerned that five years implied that a number of residents on the Isle of Dogs could not get to library or Idea store within walking distance if Cubitt Town Library is closed down. A Scrutiny Committee Member used a case example of a family with young children, who live in the Samuda Estate on the Isle of Dogs, to contest the travel time presented (via Google Maps). It required more than 26 minutes to get from their home to the Canary Wharf Idea Store.

5.2 The Scrutiny Committee were aware that the council has recently updated its borough profile information (2020) which the service may wish to consider utilising in order to help inform its EqIA. In addition, the council may also have significant information which could be used to inform the EqIA such as Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs). This was developed by Health and Wellbeing Boards to commission health-related activity, and is a rich data source in relation to demographic trends and social, economic, health and wellbeing measures

5.3 The Scrutiny Committee questioned the timing for moving Canary Wharf Idea Store as five years is a long time for a child of three to four years old as it represents a critical part of their formative educational and development years. The Independent Library Report for England⁶ adds, that there is still a clear need for safe, non-judgemental, spaces where people of ages can access knowledge for free, supported by the expertise of the library workforce. This is particularly true for the most vulnerable in society who need support and guidance and to children and young people who benefit from engagement with libraries outside of the formal classroom environment.

5.4 The Scrutiny Committee enquired if the council considered Cubitt Town Hall as the main hub whilst they wait to relocate Canary Wharf Idea Store to the Isle of Dogs with the

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388989/Independent_Library_Report-18_December.pdf

support of nearby community centres to provide additional capacity if space becomes an issue. The Scrutiny Committee also felt that moving the hub more central on Isle of Dogs may help to reduce the connection time to get to the library service and as Canary Wharf Idea Store is close to Chrisp Street Idea Store commuting between the two may be more amenable.

5.5 Whilst the Scrutiny Committee acknowledged the pressures on the council's budget and its obligations to balance the books, Scrutiny Members asked if council would give further consideration to splitting shifts at Chrisp Street Idea Store, in order to have the service hours (middle of the day) when Chrisp Street is closed. This would help free up resources to enable Cubitt Town Library access for Isle of Dogs residents who live too far away from Canary Wharf Idea Store.

5.6 The Cabinet Member conceded that Canary Wharf Idea Store might be too far to travel for some parents with young children and that some residents on the Isle of Dogs have raised their concerns that there isn't a comprehensive plan for Isle of Dogs and includes issues on Cross Harbour planning. The Cabinet Member confirmed that she would consider the split shifts as an option to provide more hours to Cubitt Town Library.

5.7 The Scrutiny Committee recognised that the Cubitt Town Library is a Carnegie library and they asked if the council applied for the funding from Carnegie UK (ended in November 2020). A Scrutiny Committee Member also cited the cost implications of closed libraries, in particular a library in Lambeth which closed and cost £2,200 per day to provide security. The Scrutiny Member felt that the challenge is that savings need to be looked at in the round, and not just based on individual portfolios. There needs to be more investigation of all options and implications to mitigate cuts on the overall savings.

5.8 The Scrutiny Committee enquired if there were any plans for the alternative use of the Cubitt Town Library building. The Cabinet Member responded that no decisions have been made as to what the site will be used for once it closed, but they imagine it will be for public good or community use.

Recommendations on Impact

Recommendation 3

The council, to review and bring up to date its Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for all Idea stores and library services with more current information so as to help better comprehend the impact on protected characteristic groups

6.1 The Scrutiny Committee questioned the value of using 2011 Census. Whilst it may be permissible to use a snapshot view, it was at most 10 years too old. The Scrutiny Committee deemed there have been significant changes in the last decade and that the 2011 Census data used for the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) did not accurately reflect the changes to the borough. The Scrutiny Committee outlined an example of this based on population numbers. There had been an increase from 2011, set at 252,000, to 325,000 in 2021. The numbers alone suggests a significant number of the population could affect the EqIA. There was also a common understanding that London Borough of Tower Hamlets was a transient borough with a significant young population. The Scrutiny Committee recommended a review of the EqIA to reflect more up to date borough profile information as this will provide better context on who the changes will impact the most.

6.2 The Scrutiny Committee noted a repetitive assumption is made within the EqlA for young people under 18 and 60 plus age group. It suggests accessing other IDEA Stores and Library Service would not be difficult as they would have accessible transport. However, the Scrutiny Committee were acutely aware that there would be an impact on the 19-59 age group and the EqlA itself suggests that the 16-64 user group would be most affected as a result of these changes.

6.3 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011⁷ which looks to address s.149 of the Equality Act, an EqlA should make reasonable attempts to provide coverage of all the nine protected characteristics⁸. The Scrutiny Committee noted that the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and sexual orientation, were absent within the EqlA. This also reinforces the Scrutiny Committee's previous point on the requirement to apply more recent borough profile data to accurately reflect the make-up of the community as these groups may also be subject to being disproportionately affected by the council's proposed changes.

6.4 The Scrutiny Committee also believe there are 'hidden communities' in Tower Hamlets, such as Travellers, who could also be disproportionately affected by the council's proposed changes impact and this needs to be considered.

6.5 The Scrutiny Committee also noted that whilst there had been some reference (within the EqlA) to the remaining Idea Stores: Bow, Chrisp Street, Canary Wharf and Whitechapel, it was very much light touch and lacked substance. Given that there would be applied cuts to service hours, including Sundays, which represents change, the Scrutiny Committee feel that the EqlA assumption is insufficient and needs to reflect the impact on the different user groups so that its robust. The Cabinet Member stated that an initial EqlA was completed and expects further EqlA will be undertaken to address the gaps.

Recommendation 4

To further undertake comprehensive risk assessments to help better understand the impact of change on wider determinants including delayed recovery and continuation of the pandemic, impact on footfall and local economy, increase in demand user groups, impact on children and young people's educational outcomes, level of social deprivation, poverty, social isolation, crime and antisocial behaviour and community tension/ cohesion.

7.1 The Scrutiny Committee were concerned about the resulting impact from the council's proposed savings. On the economy, the Scrutiny Committee were of the view that there is a looming double dip recession which may result in high levels of unemployment. There are concerns already with a huge number of businesses that have been forced to close because of the pandemic situation. Scrutiny Members were concerned about education and job poverty once the pandemic comes to an end and believe that the community will need support from the council. London Borough of Tower Hamlets is already well documented as having the highest poverty levels for children and pensioner age groups in the country. Furthermore, Scrutiny Members raised the issue that 20 of the

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>

⁸ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

neighbourhoods in the borough are classified as being in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

- 7.2 Unemployed people are a key user group for Idea Stores and library services (as indicated in the EqIA) and with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and potential negative impact from Brexit, this may increase the numbers of unemployed (as some are currently being supported by the government's interim furlough scheme). The Scrutiny Committee believe that there is a real risk of high demand for Idea Stores and library services from this group with a shortage of supply. This may worsen if social distancing measures remain in place for prolonged periods thus further reducing access to this key service at a critical time. The Scrutiny Committee questioned that if the proposals go forward, what work has been undertaken to absorb the additional footfall and how they intend to mitigate the situation with increase demand vs reduced capacity and social distancing measures in place.
- 7.3 Unemployed people are a key user group for Idea Stores and library services (as indicated in the EqIA) and with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and potential negative impact from Brexit, this may increase the numbers of unemployed (as some are currently being supported by the government's interim furlough scheme). The Scrutiny Committee believe that there is a real risk of high demand for Idea Stores and library services from this group with a shortage of supply. This may worsen if social distancing measures remain in place for prolonged periods thus further reducing access to this key service at a critical time. The Scrutiny Committee questioned that if the proposals go forward, what work has been undertaken to absorb the additional footfall and how they intend to mitigate the situation with increase demand vs reduced capacity and social distancing measures in place.
- 7.4 The Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL)⁹ argued that in times of economic hardship, it could be argued that more people will need libraries to learn new skills, seek employment, apply for jobs, write CVs etc.
- 7.5 The Scrutiny Committee commented that it's also important to think about the elderly people, particularly those who are digitally excluded. The Royal National Institute of Blind People¹⁰ argued that the presence of libraries in residential areas was of importance particularly for more vulnerable users, such as elderly and disabled people, who were often less able to travel, and more likely not to be able to afford books and IT.
- 7.6 The Scrutiny Committee examined the potential difficulties and hardship that children and young people could be facing as a result of the council's proposed changes. The Scrutiny Committee heard from two of the Youth Council Members who gave an account of their own usage of Idea Stores and library services. They commented on how much they valued the service and informed the Scrutiny Committee that they were disappointed with the proposed cutbacks to service hours. They were worried about the impact of the proposed changes on children, low income families and the unemployed. Their own experience in growing up drew out their views that many of the borough's

⁹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmcomeds/587/587.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmcomeds/587/587.pdf>

children and young people struggle to find a safe space like the Idea Stores and library services as they would often live in overcrowded accommodation.

7.7 They added that the cuts to service hours would impact them as much as their peers who use the Idea Stores and library services after school or college to complete their studies outside of the classroom environment and is a key support function that is pertinent for them to achieve well with their education goals. The two Youth Council Members also flagged up that their concerns that many of the children cannot afford laptops or need to share the usage with their siblings, and in many cases, this is about a lack of funds to purchase data for online access. The Scrutiny Committee also heard that Idea Stores and library services provide the right environment for young people to be social and connect with others given that youth club provision was cut right back and they feel that pandemic has further drawn out the inequalities felt by children from deprived backgrounds.

7.8 Scrutiny Members also questioned the cost of running the Idea Stores and library services in comparison and offsetting the costs to the council for managing issues such as anti-social behaviour (ASB), social isolation/ mental health, and more recently the impact of COVID-19 on missed schooling and education. The Scrutiny Committee felt that Idea Stores and library services will play a crucial role in helping the borough's recovery including delivering the council's strategic objectives, whether this is linked to community cohesion, health and wellbeing or economic sector. Libraries play an important role in boosting health literacy, a person's skills, knowledge and understanding about how to find and use information so they can act to support and improve their own health and wellbeing. They are also places where people can come to meet others, helping to reduce social isolation.

Recommendation 5

The council to review the use of Idea Stores and library services' spaces so that youth hubs can offer dedicated spaces for children and young people to use for their education and social connection needs.

8.1 The Scrutiny Committee reflected on the views provided by the Youth Council Members on having a dedicated space for them at the Idea Stores and Library Services. The Scrutiny Committee heard how one of the Youth Council Members had to travel to different branches of the Idea Stores to locate a place where they could be settled to study. They commented that the issue here was adults were occupying spaces which were supposed to be available for children and young people.

8.2 The Scrutiny Committee also heard about the challenges that young people face in terms of overcrowded homes and how having a safe dedicated space which can stimulate their thinking is critical to their education success. Scrutiny Committee Members enquired if the Council could consider dedicating some space at the Idea Stores for young people only.

8.3 The Cabinet Member confirmed that they are prepared to investigate better spacing for young people within the Idea Stores and acknowledged that this should also be the case for elderly residents.

Recommendations on Finance and Resources

Recommendation 6

The council, to investigate and publish the results into the research it's undertaken for alternative / external funding streams and to further include a review of its application of fund streams such as Public Health or New Homes Bonus (earmarked for reserves), that could be aligned to a longer consultation period for examining the future delivery model of Idea Stores and library services whilst undertaking further assessments on the geography of sites being considered along with the economic impact on people.

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Committee noted that the proposed revised approach to Idea Stores and library services will help to achieve savings of £1million (£400k against existing MTFS and £600k of new savings). The Cabinet papers from 27 January 2021 which includes appendix 4B¹¹ indicates that savings from 2018-19 and 2019-20 have not been delivered. Given that the previous in year's savings have not been met, the Scrutiny Committee believe that the Mayor in Cabinet should reflect on the need to make further savings of £600k (on top of the contribution the Idea Stores and library services are already required to make) and that perhaps the Mayor should strongly consider scaling back this saving.
- 9.2 The Scrutiny Committee commented on the extension of Greater London Leisure (GLL) contracts and believe that these should be reviewed in the round as opposed to proposing savings coming out of Idea Stores and library services, given that this is one of the council's flagship strengths. Scrutiny Members also questioned the thinking behind treating Idea Stores and library services differently to the leisure contract.
- 9.3 Scrutiny Members believe a review of the councils' application funding steams such as Public Health funding should be considered in the round for Idea Stores and library services support. The Scrutiny Committee were also concerned that this savings proposal disproportionately affected front line services and they believe that this needs to be seen in the context (not of a budget that's been put on the table) that there is £7 Million pounds of New Homes Bonus being set aside (reserves) for next year to be spent the year after. Scrutiny Members believe that this level of finance could potentially be made available and use some of this (£250k) to offset savings proposal for Idea Stores and library services. Scrutiny Committee struggle to see how cuts this deep meet their agenda to serve residents.
- 9.4 Historically, councils have been the primary funding source of public libraries. The Libraries Taskforce¹² believe that delivering critical services direct to the community through libraries can lead to better outcomes for the public and savings in other services' budget. The council might also wish to consider funding streams including:
- Philanthropy and fundraising such as schemes similar to council's Space Hive Crowd Funding.
 - Social Impact Bonds (to support initiatives in areas such as digital inclusion, literacy or business growth)

¹¹ <https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s179275/6.1.4B%20New%20Savings%20Proposals%20Proformas.pdf>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-to-2021>

- Private Sector Partnerships (Sponsorship funding) or through council's strategic Partnership Executive Group.
- Wider Grants and Blended funds where relevant e.g. New Home Building Fund.

9.5 Scrutiny Members believe that a longer consultation period would be required to examine more details cost implications beyond transactional savings and the wider economic impact this will have on residents. Scrutiny Members expressed that they would like to see a review of geography of the sites as Bethnal Green Library remains an important space for north of the borough and cutting service hours would be problematic particularly as Pritchard Road Day Centre being closed and elderly residents being signposted to use Bethnal Green Library when the service is being reduced by 70%. Scrutiny Members also felt that the timing of the current consultation was poor and should have been delayed given that the country is in the midst of a worldwide pandemic and for a significant number of residents their concerns would about the impact of COVID-19 and dealing with the loss of life and that this should be reviewed to a time when people can give the merits of the proposal real consideration.

9.6 A local Ward Councillor also raised the concern and felt that his constituents were not aware of the consultation and questioned how this was publicised. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that in normal times they would have taken a face to face approach in consulting with residents, however given the pandemic situation, the council had extensively promoted the online consultation and two focus groups to the community as an alternative option, a dedicated phone number was also provided for staff to carry out the survey over the phone. Council officers also added that prior to Idea Stores being closed by the government's lockdown measure, paper copies were made available for residents to complete and drop back. The Cabinet Member conceded that if more consultation time is required then this is something that they can look into.

Recommendation 7

The council, to investigate and publish its results on how it can develop revenue streams from commercialisation of the Idea Stores and Library services physical premises and its digitalisation agenda to offset some of the savings requirements and future proof the sustainability of Idea Stores and library services.

10.1 In general, Idea Stores and library service's duty is to provide library service that is free and universally accessible. Library services such as book loans, information provision and computer access are still a core part of what's on offer, but the service should be able to work with the community to develop other functions based on what local people want and need.

10.2 The Scrutiny Committee believe that the council needs to investigate further how it can develop income streams to help offset some of its savings proposal and also consider how it develops sustainable income and support to the service in the long-term. The Scrutiny Committee questioned what work has been done to assess how these key flagship community assets could generate income. Similarly, there needs to be requirement to examine new ways of funding Idea Stores and library services and offsetting the investment in buildings and staff through greater partnership working. Economies and efficiencies cannot simply come from cutting back the library budgets or making transactional savings.

10.3 The Scrutiny Committee cited the co-locating of services housed within the Idea Stores and library services, as often libraries are seen as the 'front door' of the council service. At the time, it was an innovative proposal to develop a new One Stop Shop aligned to the development of a new Watney Market Idea Store in Watney Market to provide lifelong learning opportunities for local residents. The new community facility would enhance the market offer. Value for money was a primary element of the proposal and the co-location of the Watney Market Idea Store and One Stop Shop would enable more effective and efficient delivery of localised services. It was cheaper to link the two developments and joined up working would be improved. The Scrutiny Committee believe that It would be prudent to follow this line of thinking.

10.4 Many library services are already co-located with other partners, colleges, Jobcentres, post offices, citizen advice, tourist information, health centres and many other services. This provides an opportunity to collect sustainable income from renting space whilst increasing the footfall whilst providing an outreach community service. At the time of public service resource constraints, Idea Stores and library services which are well positioned and are considered as the 'front door' to council services could look to expand its assets and use them as venue for police surgeries, health centres and volunteer groups, enabling to share costs, extend opening hours and provide accessible services. There are also opportunities for the council to partner up with government agencies such as the Driving Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) to hold the theory driving test and Home office to support 'Life in the UK tests' and act as a certified test centre.

Recommendation 8

The council, to market and publicise the commercialisation opportunities of the Idea Stores and library services (using its communication channels and advertising space) and to further include engagement with different media groups such as Bangladeshi Language Media, Social Media Influencers and others to help it achieve a wider footfall reach for business opportunities and revenue growth.

11.1 There are significant risks involved if there is no attention to the media as it plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions and raising awareness about public libraries and services they provide. Currently there is greater focus on stories about changes to library service provision, library closures and the perceived diminishing role of public libraries due to the internet. There is also a real need to develop positive messages about libraries and the outcomes they support, and reflect these consistently throughout interviews, placed editorial and other media, including online channels.

11.2 The Scrutiny Committee felt that to support the Idea Stores and library services commercialisation and income generation agenda, the council needs to broaden its media and communications network, and to include different media groups which serve the diverse community of Tower Hamlets (as many residents may not be aware of the opportunity to utilise the facilities of Idea Stores and library services). Equally, the Idea Stores and library services may also be positioned to act as gate keeper in promoting business services and development opportunities via its website services.

11.3 Scrutiny Members understand that a significant proportion of the Bangladeshi community obtain their information from media channels such as Channel S and Bangla TV. This should be factored in when developing the campaign and publicity as to how

residents like to receive the information. Over the past few years, there has been a momentous growth with social media influencers, in particular with the younger age group who use this platform as part of gathering information and forming their opinions. Therefore, this could be an important consideration when developing the engagement publicity with specific age groups.

- 11.4 At a local level, Ward Councillors could help to raise public awareness of the Idea Stores and library services as well as signing up to library e-bulletins for filtering to constituents. Councillors could also hold surgeries within the libraries and local MPs should be encouraged to do so. Any publicity and marketing of the Idea Stores and library services needs to be underpinned by a broad media strategy which can reflect commonly agreed messages about the service. In this case, the primary focus should be on publicising of what Idea Stores and library services can do and persuading more people to use them.

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Non-Executive Report of the: Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 March 2021	
Report of: Sharon Godman Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance	Classification: Unrestricted
Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: How does the Council apply evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?	

Originating Officer(s)	Filuck Miah Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate
Wards affected	All (All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report submits the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s (OSC) Challenge Session examining how the council applies evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling. It makes a number of recommendations for consideration.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the attached Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and agree the recommendations; and
2. Agree to submit the attached report to the Mayor and Cabinet for executive response.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This paper submits the report and recommendations of the former Scrutiny Lead for Community Safety and Environment for consideration by OSC List the reasons for the decision

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the scrutiny challenge session provides a number of recommendations on behaviour change to boost council recycling rates for the council to consider and take forward.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets performs poorly in terms of recycling waste (23.2% of total waste is recycled) compared to other boroughs (Bexley 54.1%, Waltham

Forest 31.6%, Greenwich 33.4%, Hackney 27.9%, City of London 29.9%) with only Newham lower at 16.9%.

- 3.2 The Mayor set an ambitious target of 35% recycling by 2022.
- 3.3 OSC wanted to understand how the council has responded to the flagging recycling rates in the borough, with a particular focus on influencing resident behaviour.
- 3.4 The former Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety, Cllr Bex White decided to hold an Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session with the focus: How does the council apply evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?
- 3.5 The Challenge Session was underpinned by the further core questions:
 - To what extent is evidence based and external research applied in how the council uses its resources to achieve behaviour change on recycling?
 - How is the council using outcomes of pilot projects to improve mainstream delivery?
 - How is the council maximising the influence/ residents including schools who are very committed to increasing recycling?
 - Can the council highlight any insights (behavioural change) on campaigns for resident engagement on recycling and the impact?
- 3.6 The Challenge Session was held virtually on 23 September 2020 - chaired by Councillor Bex White (former Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety) - commencing with a chair's overview, followed by a joint presentation from the former Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm, Cllr Asma Islam, supported by council officers. Resource London were also invited to the session - they are a London-wide partnership programme and the government efficiency resource body. Resource London works closely with Tower Hamlets Waste and Recycling Service and they have provided an external perspective on insights from research such as factors influencing recycling behaviour change.
- 3.7 The Challenge Session resulted in the development of a number of recommendations:

Using Evidence and Research to Deliver Behaviour Change

1. Take forward the case study brought by Committee Member of a development in their ward to see how the planning process has been working historically
2. Review the location of estate bins to minimise contamination by passers-by
3. Making changes to physical barriers to help influence positive behaviour change
4. Reconsider clear bag provision for flats as an intervention to aid behaviour change on recycling

Improving Mainstream Delivery through Pilot Project

5. Investigate and application small grants programme for small private developments along the lines of the SME energy efficiency programme
6. Ensure the council's Waste and Recycling Service factors in the cost element for the Flats Recycling Package and demonstrate the value of the council's existing initiatives such as mixed-recycling-collection when undertaking cost-benefit analysis
7. Review the pilot of the food waste to flats scheme and the target audience. Develop plans so that council's Waste and Recycling Service is ready to go when this statutory duty comes in

Influencing Residents Behaviour Change to Increase Recycling

8. Schools programme, working closely with the young mayor to improve engagement with young people and support behaviour change on recycling
9. Using Influencers of particular age groups (18-34) to engage, motivate and channel key messages to improve behaviour change on recycling

Media Campaigns to Support Resident Engagement with Recycling

10. Improving recycling education messaging so there is a common framework of understanding from residents
11. Recycling performance targets to be more ambitious (stretched) not just realistic and resident contribution to be framed in how progress is being made a local level

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The challenge session considers equality and diversity issues specific to the demographics of Tower Hamlets and ensures that the applicability of evidence provided at the session has equalities in mind. It also gives consideration as to how language impacts people with council campaigns and how engagement might work with a second language.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
 - Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 Recycling is a key part of the circular economy for reuse, reduce and recycle and bring about the following benefits including; conserving natural resources, protects the ecosystems and wildlife, reduces demand for raw materials, saves energy, cuts climate change carbon emissions, creates jobs (green economy) and is cheaper than waste collection and disposal. It also helps the local authority to reduce its landfill costs and improve its contamination rates.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.
- 6.2 Any costs arising from the implementation of the recommendations from the Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session Report will need to be contained within the existing service budget or considered as part of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Council has the legal function of both a waste collection and waste disposal authority. It is responsible for making appropriate arrangements for the collection and disposal of waste.
- 7.2 This report recommends various actions are undertaken to improve the uptake of recycling by residents within the borough. The Council has the legal power to undertake these activities if it so wishes.
- 7.3 Should the Council elect to undertake a small grants programme approval for the programme and associated applications will need to be granted by the Grants Determination subcommittee of Cabinet in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- NONE

Appendices

- Scrutiny Challenge Session Report: How does the council apply evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- NONE.

Officer contact details for documents:
Filuck Miah - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate

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ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY CHALLENGE SESSION REPORT

How does the council apply evidence and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?

01/03/2021

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Chair's Foreword

The issue of waste and recycling is one filled with debate and we know that waste management impacts on the quality of life of all residents with overflowing bins, fly-tipping and waste dumped on estates creating an unpleasant environment that can lead to other anti-social behaviours.

As the former Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety portfolio, I am pleased to present this report that seeks to understand the extent to which the council is applying best practice and evidence-based approach with tackling its recycling rates and to how this guides the council's behaviour change work.

This report makes a number of practical recommendations for the council and its partners to consider and put into action and improve recycling rates. The recommendations are also intended to support the council's focus on making the most of efficient use of resources, moving towards early intervention and prevention.

This report acknowledges that whilst there has been successful behavioural change for kerbside properties on recycling i.e. housing; a large proportion of the borough's flatted properties remains a key strategic challenge. This issue is further compounded by the fact that flatted properties only yield 50% recycling that the average kerbside. Given the physical size of the borough, future growth of the borough's housing development will largely consist of flatted type of properties. Currently, over 80% of the borough's population are living in flats¹ and this is unlikely to change.

This report learns about the findings (gives context) conducted from research on behaviour called 'making recycling work for people in flats' that took place between August 2017 to November 2019 that involved a collaboration of partners led by Resource London (part of London Waste and Recycling Board) and Peabody within eight inner London boroughs including Tower Hamlets (across 12 selected estates).

The Challenge Session's Scrutiny Committee heard from council's Waste and Recycling Service along with its key partner Resource London on how they have used evidence based and best practice to guide their behaviour change work. This session helped the scrutiny Committee made recommendations for the council's Waste and Recycling Service to take forward.

I'd like to thank following people who contributed to this challenge session:

- Gemma Scott from Resource London who provided an account of the partnership research project on behaviour change across 12 Peabody Estates in London to help frame the discussion
- The Cabinet Member for Environment Councillor Asma Islam and team of council officers who gave an overview on their project work and responded to scrutiny questions
- my scrutiny colleagues who supported the discussion and helped to construct some of the recommendations

Councillor Bex White

Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety



¹ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/WasteStrategy_final.pdf

Summary of Recommendations

Using Evidence and Research to Deliver Behaviour Change

1	Take forward the case study brought by Committee Member of a development in their ward to see how the planning process has been working historically
2	Review the location of estate bins to minimise contamination by passers-by
3	Making changes to physical barriers to help influence positive behaviour change.
4	Reconsider clear bag provision for flats as an intervention to aid behaviour change on recycling

Improving Mainstream Delivery through Pilot Project

5	Investigate and application small grants programme for small private developments along the lines of the SME energy efficiency programme
6	Ensure the council's Waste and Recycling Service factors in the cost element for Flats Recycling Package and demonstrate the value of the council's existing initiatives for example mixed-recycling-collection when undertaking cost-benefit analysis.
7	Review the pilot of the food waste to flats scheme and the target audience. Develop plans so that council's Waste and Recycling Service is ready to go when this statutory duty comes in.

Influencing Residents Behaviour Change to Increase Recycling

8	Schools programme, working closely with the young mayor to improve engagement with young people and support behaviour change on recycling.
9	Using Influencers of particular age groups (18-34) to engage, motivate and channel key messages to improve behaviour change on recycling.

Media Campaigns to Support Resident Engagement with Recycling

10	Improving recycling education messaging so there is a common framework of understand from residents
11	Recycling performance targets to be more ambitious (stretched) not just realistic and resident contribution to be framed in how progress is being made a local level.

Introduction

- 1.1 The study of behaviour change is an established discipline, sometimes known as behavioural science that supports a more realistic understanding of what makes people tick. It is primarily concerned with understanding behaviour and developing effective interventions to influence it. Behaviour change interventions may include activities, policies, products, and services designed to make a difference to the way people act.
- 1.2 Understanding behaviour change and developing behaviour change interventions should be a part of the council's approach to responding to complex issues and achieving desirable outcomes for the borough and its residents, businesses, and communities.
- 1.3 One of the biggest challenges the council faces is around waste management Having to balancing priorities between promoting recycling and protecting consumers against harmful chemical substances in recycled materials; there is also lack of real data collection as well as quality aspects related to recycling; energy recovery of waste; and waste prevention.
- 1.4 Recycling is the process of converting waste products into new materials and objects which would otherwise be thrown away as rubbish. It also helps to reduce the consumption of raw materials and therefore reduces energy, landfill sites, lowers the greenhouse gas emissions and tackles climate change. Recycling² is an integral component of modern waste reduction i.e. reduce, re-use and recycle. Additionally, increasing recycling helps to conserve natural resources, protects the natural ecosystem and wildlife, cheaper than waste collection and disposal.
- 1.5 Tower Hamlets council's Waste and Recycling Service is charged with this task and they can be thought of as 'interventionists' whose goal is to design and implement programmes or interventions that produced the desired behaviour changes to improving recycling rates.
- 1.6 More broadly, policy challenges often have a strong behavioural dimension, and, in this context, the success of policy interventions largely depends on achieving sustainable changes in way people respond. Furthermore, behavioural change interventions based on social norms are considered to be popular and cost-effective that can lead to transforming behaviour outputs for increasing environment and social sustainability.
- 1.7 Motivation plays a critical role in behaviour change and this can be both from internal and external dimension. Internal motivators can include one's environmental values, beliefs, and attitudes whilst external motivators are the reasons behind affecting recycling attitudes, intentions and behaviours such as monetary incentives, community pressure or government regulations.
- 1.8 Scaling up behaviour change will often require a shift in 'cultural' change amongst different group of people within organisations and communities. It requires simultaneously targeting behaviours of different stakeholders including policy makers, commissioners, planners, service providers, users, and the general public.

² <http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/rrr.html>

Reason for Enquiry

- 2.1 The global picture shows waste volumes increasing rapidly - the World Bank estimates a 70% global increase in municipal solid waste up to 2025. Recycling is considered as an essential part in reducing the environmental impact of waste.
- 2.2 Government bodies including the UK were required to meet the 2008 European Union (EU) Waste Framework Directive that set recycling targets - prior to Brexit, the UK was required to meet an existing EU target of recycling a minimum of 50% (by weight) of its household waste by 2020.
- 2.3 In 2018, the EU amended the Waste Framework Directive and required member nations to recycle at least 70% of all packaged goods by 2030 and for household recycling rates to be 65% by 2035. Germany³ has had the highest recycling rate in the World at 65% of all waste it produced in 2020 being recycled with the England⁴ at 44.7%, Scotland at 42.8% Northern Ireland 47.7% and Wales at 54%.
- 2.4 Locally, Tower Hamlets⁵ performs poorly in recycling 23.2%, compared to highest performing boroughs Bexley 54.1%, Ealing 52.6%, and Bromley 50.1%. With neighbouring boroughs performing at: Waltham Forest 31.6%, Greenwich 33.4%, Hackney 27.9%, City of London 29.9%, with only Newham positioned as the worst performing London borough at 16.9%.
- 2.5 Prior to 2019, the council's waste and recycling provision was outsourced to Veolia (private sector organisation). In 2019 the waste and recycling services were brought in-house to meet and deliver future improvements as agreed by Cabinet⁶ on 31 October 2018.
- 2.6 The council's Waste Management Strategy 2018-30⁷ titled 'Don't let our future go to waste' is the council's strategic approach to managing waste (including recycling) in Tower Hamlets until 2030. The Mayor also set an ambitious target of 35% recycling 2022. It further accepts that the borough needs to reduce the amount of waste created and increase the percentage that is reused, recycled or composted'.
- 2.7 In 2016, we noted a scrutiny challenge on recycling was held focusing on promoting a shared responsibility and removing barriers to improve recycling the borough. This challenge session's report focusses its energy on evidence based and best practice that influences resident's behaviour change.
- 2.8 Overview and Scrutiny wanted to understand how the council has responded to the flagging recycling rates in the borough, with a particular focus on influencing resident behaviour.

³ <https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en/indicator-recycling-municipal-waste>

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918270/UK_Statistics_on_Waste_statistical_notice_March_2020_accessible_FINAL_updated_size_12.pdf

⁵ <https://www.letsrecycle.com/councils/league-tables/2018-19-overall-performance/>

⁶ <http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s137457/6.8%20Waste%20Management%20Delivery%20Options.pdf>

⁷ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/WasteStrategy_final.pdf

2.9 Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety, Cllr Bex White decided to hold an Environment Scrutiny Challenge Session with the focus: How does the council apply evidence-based and best practice to influence resident behaviour change to boost recycling rates?

2.10 The Challenge Session was underpinned by the further core questions:

- To what extent is evidence based and external research applied in how the council uses its resources to achieve behaviour change on recycling?
- How is the council using outcomes of pilot projects to improve mainstream delivery?
- How is the council maximising the influence/ residents including schools who are very committed to increasing recycling?
- Can the council highlight any insights (behavioural change) on campaigns for resident engagement on recycling and the impact?

Methodology

3.1 The Challenge Session scope helped to frame the session and it considered the following factors to influence the direction of the session:

- The council's recycling rates⁸ had dropped from 26.4% in 2017/18 and in 2018/19 it was performing at 23.2% and in general it had a low recycling rate performance.
- Scrutiny wanted to understand how the council was using evidence-based research to influence behaviour change which could help to improve the recycling rates.
- How the pilot projects (behaviours) outcomes are being implemented for improvements
- Understand the different types influences that could improve behaviour change towards recycling

3.2 The scope further helped to frame of the objective of the session which wanted to establish the extent to which the Council is applying best practice and evidence approach to tackling its recycling rates and one which maps out the internal structures and guides the council's behaviour change work. It outlined its risk mitigation controls including people such as activists could come across with fixed ideas of doing things differently; and the session needs provides opportunity for robust evidence and generation of new ideas (including best practice from outside). It considered equality and diversity factors on how language impacts people with communication campaigns and how engagement from groups work with second languages.

3.3 The Challenge Session was held virtually (MS Teams) on Wednesday 23 September 2020 from 10am to 12pm chaired by Councillor Bex White (Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety).

3.4 The Session commence with the chair's overview, followed by a joint presentation on "How does the council apply evidence based and best practice to influence residents' behaviour change to boost recycling rates?" given by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm, Cllr Asma Islam, supported by council officers.

⁸ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/WasteStrategy_final.pdf

3.5 Resource London were also invited to the session. They are a London wide partnership programme (formed by London Waste and Recycling Board (LWRAB) and Waste Resource Action Programme (WRAP)) and also the government efficiency resource body. The partnership represents a single-agency approach in providing specific, focused and tailored regional and local support for London waste authorities. Resource London works closely with Tower Hamlets Waste and Recycling Service and they provided an external perspective on insights from research they conducted between 2017-19 and included factors which influenced recycling behaviour change for flatted properties.

3.6 The challenge session provided opportunities for Scrutiny Members to present lines of enquiry on the topic and helped to construct recommendation put forward by the Scrutiny Committee.

3.7 Finally, the chair concluded the session by summarising key points, and outlining potential recommendations and next steps.

3.8 Members in Attendance

Councillor Bex White	Scrutiny Lead for Environment and Community Safety (Challenge Session Chair)
Councillor Asma Islam	Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Realm (Lead of Environment)
Councillor James King	Scrutiny Member / Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Andrew Wood	OSC Member
Councillor Marc Francis	OSC Member

Evidence received from officers and experts:

Gemma Scott	Local Authority Support Manager, Resource London (part of London Waste and Recycling Board)
Dan Jones	Divisional Director Public Realm, LBTH
Richard Williams	Business Manager Operational Services
Fiona Heyland	Environmental Services Improvement Manager, LBTH
Chris Humphreys	Senior Communications Officer LBTH
Keiko Okawa	Senior Strategy and Policy Manager, Place, LBTH
James Scott	Communications Officer, LBTH

The session was supported by Filuck Miah - Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate.

Key Findings

Resource London and Peabody Estates Project

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from the council's Waste and Recycling Services alongside Resource London (part of London Waste and Recycling Board).
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Committee noted the findings identified from the practical research 'making recycling work for people in flats' that took place between August 2017 to November 2019. The research examined how recycling performance can be improved; crucially, looking at this from the residents' view (as previous studies on flat services fitted around operational constraints and logistics of council's rather than the needs of residents). The research uses Peabody (one of the largest social Landlords in London) properties within eight inner London boroughs of which Tower Hamlets had three estates as case studies. London Borough of Tower Hamlets had been selected for the study because it holds a high proportion of flat properties despite this, there appears to be a lack of best practice on recycling evidence for flat properties. More broadly, this is a London wide issue as GLA figures suggest 85% of future developments being built will be flats. Research London indicated that their previous research findings suggest that flat services yield around 50% less recycling when benchmarked against kerbside properties.
- 4.3 Resource London suggested that this is the most comprehensive flats recycling evidence-based study conducted in the UK, focussing on dry recycling. The justification for focussing on 'flatted' properties as supposed to houses was due to the fact that there was already a successful behaviour change and increased performance for kerbside properties. Resource London also confirmed that a significant amount of funding was applied to improve recycling performance in flat properties but, despite this they remain of the view that they are no closer to understanding how to improve performance and more broadly felt in general that there is lack of reliable performance data on recycling rates for individual estates and flatted properties that often causes challenges for monitoring and evaluating interventions implemented.
- 4.4 The Scrutiny Committee heard that the duration of this particular study enabled to draw out the evidence of what worked well and took on board the critical role that monitoring and evaluation played. The research reviewed a range of activities to obtain insights on the key issues that included inventories, ethnographic research, detailed bin weighing and waste composition analysis. In addition, the research placed emphasis on 130 inventories that were examined and included comprehensive site visits across the Peabody estates to understand better the issues such as physical layout, walking routes, signage, location and quality of existing waste management facilities. It also considered other key factors such as the involvement of Resident Tenants Association (RTA) if there was an onsite caretaker and level of estate activity on recycling.
- 4.5 The Scrutiny Committee noted that finding from the Peabody estates' inventories presented a real lack of consistency of service provision to people. Furthermore, even within the boroughs, there was noticeable variance with some estates having a

good level of service whilst others did not. It also highlighted that the services focussed on operational compatibility rather than making it easy for the resident to recycle and that there remained significant outstanding issues with bin overflows for both residual and recycling waste; that signage was either poor, not clear or non-existent and this was compounded with issues of bulky waste items.

4.6 The Scrutiny Committee heard how the ethnographic study was applied to understand the different factors driving the behaviour change and barriers that residents experience with recycling and provide context to approach required to improve resident's (who live in flats) experience of recycling and included:

- How waste management routines fit into everyday life and family dynamics
- How people interact with public and private spaces they inhabit
- What the social norms are and how they will impact on individual recycling behaviour
- The justifications people make for not recycling effectively
- What people think about the communication they receive regarding waste and recycling.

4.7 The ethnographic study identified the reasons for behaviour change complexity. Whilst, residents may have good intention to recycle they are often impeded because of the issues they encounter. Someone dedicated in sorting their waste (small kitchen area) and getting down to the bins only to find bins are overflowing would increase their demotivation. It also identified issues on the lack of accountability as it is difficult to pinpoint which users might be problematic as there is a real anonymity on waste and recycling on flatted development i.e. external bins for flats are communal and used by hundreds of people.

4.8 The results also suggest that effective recycling is mostly achieved when residents are motivated. The research discovered that having the correct knowledge improves one's psychological capabilities thus facilitating the improved behaviour change as set out in the COM-B paradigm⁹.

4.9 The Scrutiny Committee also noted that the research results were shared with different stakeholder groups and the outcome of the discussion contributed to the proposed 'Flats Recycling Package' (FRP) that consisted on a common standard service across all 12 case study estates in London whilst improving the aesthetics of the sites. The research hypothesis suggested that if it was pleasant to look at then people will not want to use the provision. The 'Flats Recycling Package' common standard included:

4.10 Clean and well-maintained bin areas; adequate collection to prevent overflows; aperture large enough to accept plastic bags and locked reverse lid bins; collect six main materials; conveniently located bins; clear and visible signage; posters with recycling inside blocks; and resident informed about what to do with their bulky waste.

⁹ <https://www.laterlifetraining.co.uk/com-b-behaviour-change-model-mitchie-et-al-2011/>

4.11 The research further outlined that behavioural interventions (identified at stakeholder engagement) such as additional small recycling bins; emotive signage; feedback posters; in home storage solution and tenant information pack were integral to the FRP.

4.12 The emerging results of the research suggests that the basic minimum FRP was the key to unlocking improved recycling behaviour and acted as the main driver in delivering improved performance across all the estates. It also suggests that this had the largest impact when compared to other applied behaviour interventions. Over the course of the research project¹⁰ the overall capture rate was 22%, recycling rates¹¹ by 26% and contamination 24%.

4.13 The Scrutiny Committee noted that comparisons in level of improvement had wide variations for different estates. The research suggests that estates of poorer environment benefited from the biggest impact and most improved performance in recycling, but the results of the five behaviour interventions were less conclusive. It also identified that motivation of residents particularly 18-34 age group/renters to recycle remained an issue and limited recycling performance.

4.14 The Scrutiny Committee also heard that a 'carrot or stick' approach may not be as effective for flats as there are too many people in the development using the bins. They do not have a direct relationship like kerbside properties where it can produce a number of collections including fortnightly and produce the required capacity which has been proven to be effective in improving recycling performance.

LBTH Estates Recycling Improvement Project

5.1 The Scrutiny Committee heard from the council's Waste and Recycling Team who presented their findings on their pilot project undertaken between October 2018 - March 2019 called 'London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) estates recycling improvement project'. The project was broadly based on the results of Resource London and Peabody Project.

5.2 They confirmed that completing phase one of the LBTH estates recycling improvement project consisted of capturing the background to the project. The council commissioned 'Keep Britain Tidy'¹² to audit existing inventories of LBTH estates as well as blocks of flats in order to help the council to collate crucial insights about the existing waste and recycling infrastructure. This included detailed surveys of bin stores and recycling containers, mapping information of 2043 blocks of flats. Their results suggest a trend towards over provision of refuse and under provision for recycling. The insights also helped to discover and strengthen the need for increasing recycling and refuse capacity.

5.3 The project partnered up with stakeholders including Tower Hamlets Homes, Bancroft Tenant Management Organisation and Veolia (former contractor) to design and test practical interventions including bin frames, locked reverse lid bins (supports reduction in contamination) and disseminate joint communication to residents – providing them appropriate information and ensuring that the estates had good, visible signage.

¹⁰ The increases were from a low base to begin with

¹¹ The average recycling rates across all 12 estates pre intervention was 10.7% and post intervention was 13.4% - Resource London and Peabody Project data

¹² National independent organisation who are heavily involved in activities to reduce litter and waste with the goal of improving places

5.4 The Scrutiny Committee also noted that the council's Waste and Recycling Service worked closely with Tower Hamlets Homes Environmental Services as well as having some of the estates care taking staff in undertaking joint visits, checking conditions of the bins, leafleting and door knocking residents. The project provided scope for care takers to visit the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) and understand how LBTH recycling is sorted. The council's Waste and Recycling Service introduced better signage and improved bin stickers and obtained support from the council's Communication Service to design branded communication assets included pictorial visualisation, iconography to help residents understand the items that can be recycled and the correct bins to use.

Incentive Scheme Pilot

6.1 The Scrutiny Committee heard that the council commissioned an external organisation call Team 'Jump' to run a small pilot (supported through Mayoral pledge) between December 2019 and February 2020 across three estates i.e. Parkview, Mansford and Manchester. The rationale behind the pilot was to test if resident incentive schemes lead to increased recycling. It involved direct door campaign, leafleting residents and creating an ongoing dialogue via its newsletter and app. Vouchers were used as the incentive for the highest scoring resident and at the end of the scheme the top estate would donate its prize to a local charity. Recycling volume was measured using fill-level sensors for bins. Overall, the council felt that a longer pilot was needed to assess fully if an incentive scheme can influence recycling behaviour.

6.2 In 2011, Defra launched a reward and recognition fund in partnership with SERCO as a pilot to test innovative ideas to encourage positive behaviour, Funding was provided to 28 projects including recycling. An evaluation of the scheme was published in 2016, called 'Waste reward and recognition fund. It concluded that improvement made to recycling and reuse tended to be linked to better services, communications and promotion rather than being ascribed to the scheme's reward component.

6.3 The council's 2016 scrutiny report¹³ on 'Promoting a shared responsibility and removing barriers to improved recycling in the borough' mentions that certain pre-conditions needed to be considered for a reward and recognition scheme to be successful.

Supplementary Planning Document and council's Next Steps

7.1 The Scrutiny Committee noted that the council's Waste and Recycling Service is looking to introduce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in early 2021 to support the waste and recycling agenda for new developments.

7.2 The SPD provides specific guidance for developers on how to implement the council's policies when they are submitting their planning applications. A key element of the SPD will be the user journey and includes residents and estate management, the building/ development and how this is used once occupied. The SPD becomes critical for developers as they will need to consider and demonstrate a start to end process of how recyclable material will pass from the individual dwellings right through to its contained storage system.

¹³ <https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=120277>

7.3 The Scrutiny Committee also noted the next steps for the council's Waste and Recycling Service and includes continued stakeholder engagement, support with general communication and messaging activities, development of an online managing agent toolkit, rolling out the FRP on THH estates whilst further promoting the FRP to all the boroughs housing associations and managing agents as well as consult further on the adoption of the SPD.

Recommendations

Using Evidence and Research to Deliver Behaviour Change

Recommendation 1

Take forward the case studies brought by the Committee Member of a development in their ward to see how the planning process has been working historically

- 8.1 A Scrutiny Member used a planning issue case study within their ward area to draw out the concern on how much recycling factors as a key driver for planning applications. The Scrutiny Member undertook a site tour of Newfoundland, a 60-storey building finishing in 2020 with 636 apartments developed by the Canary Wharf Group.
- 8.2 Prior to completion, the Scrutiny Member asked the onsite project manager (inspecting the floor plates) how they intended to remove waste and recycle. The project manager responded that he did not know and wasn't informed of this. The Scrutiny Member felt that more needs to be done to strengthen influencing behaviour change given that their example highlighted developers were building without thinking through the recycling issue. The Scrutiny Member further cited that another development within their ward area where apartments were completed in 2020, continued to have an issue for accessing the bin store (basement) that required fob key access so some residents 'dump' the rubbish at the door. The example showed that there was little or no consequence for poor recycling practice and that the council needs to apply enforcement against developments and managing agents to be more proactive.
- 8.3 Furthermore, the Deregulation Act 2015 has limited that council's scope to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) and penalty charge notices to residents. The implementation of these remained difficult, they are not very cost effective and include a lengthy process for issuing FPNs with more opportunities for residents to appeals.
- 8.4 The Scrutiny Member pointed out that a council's Planning Committee is scheduled the following evening with two large developers on the agenda. The Scrutiny Member asked if the council's Waste and Recycling Service have any powers to request council Planning Department colleagues to refuse a planning application on the grounds that the developers failed compliance on waste and recycling, or the perception to address the waste and recycling aspect on the planning was insufficient. The Scrutiny Member felt that the council's Waste and Recycling Service needs to be more proactive with their planning colleagues on being critical on planning applications which are not doing enough on recycling.
- 8.5 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that it does have representation for planning application matters. The officer collaborates with planning colleagues to advise them on submitted planning applications and part of this involves retaining the power to put forward an objection/veto if the planning application does not meet the recycling threshold. The council's Waste and Recycling Service advised that the new guidance would outline the acceptable thresholds on recycling for developers. The council's Waste and Recycling Service team indicated that it meets with developers at the pre application planning stage to discuss their plans. It also involves developers understanding that their proposals may be inadequate on waste and recycling and there

was room for improvement. The Waste and Recycling Service have put forward more realistic forecast of performance factoring in growth in flats and challenges in dealing with historic legacy of poorly designed flats. The council's Waste and Recycling Service stated that whilst the new SPD will go to addressing the issues highlighted above, they believe it would be difficult for the service to place sanctions against residents in communal properties who choose not to recycle.

Recommendation 2

Review location of estate bins to minimise contamination by passers-by

9.1 A Scrutiny Member drew attention to problems with estates recycling and they felt that a significant proportion of residents do not want recycle bins outside the flats. This often leads to bins being placed at the end of the block of flats resulting in the bins being exposed to passers-by who 'dump' their rubbish. Some housing associations have adopted to change by clearly demarking what is recycling space. The Scrutiny Member also raised the issue with estate recycling linked to the frequency of contamination of bins i.e. every one of them has a black bag and when collections are not made these become public realm issues. The Scrutiny Member felt that the council's Waste and Recycling Service needed to be more assertive with THH and Housing Associations in relocating their bins where they are not going to attract passers-by to dump litter.

9.2 The council's Waste and Recycling Service accepted that contamination and performance was a key priority to ensure that improvements and reliability is achieved. They explained that it has a strong weekly focus, targeting those crews where there have been failure resulting in improved performance, but acknowledged that weekly focus needs to continue and that the service will explore monitoring arrangements. They also added that whilst the council's Waste and Recycling Service can make recommendation to Landlord and or managing agent to placing bins in more suitable locations, this would be difficult to enforce as the managing agent/landlord has the duty of care for the property and would need to ensure fire and other risks are mitigated when choosing bin locations.

Recommendation 3

Making changes to physical barriers to help influence positive behaviour change.

10.1 The Scrutiny Committee asked the council's Waste and Recycling Service if any considerations have been given to the physical interventions to help make recycling more accessible. The Scrutiny Member outlined the example of living in a fourth-floor block (designed in 60's or 70's) and having to throw the rubbish into bins which are 1.5 metres high. The Scrutiny Member added that the recycling were placed outside and that people would often leave the recycling at the bottom of the bins rather than throwing it in to the bins as they are not required to go into the bin store which creates a real issue for access, recycling and disposing of waste properly. The Scrutiny Committee questioned if there should be considerations for physical change and not just behaviour for the recycling systems. The Scrutiny Committee enquired as to why Underground Refuse Storage (URS) systems are not been more widely implemented but ultimately, as far as a discussion point the Scrutiny Committee felt that physical interventions would aid in changing people's behaviour.

10.2 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that current work with Tower Hamlets Homes estates will allow the service to consider physical adaptations that can be made to recycling infrastructure on the estates but with the caveat that ultimately these decisions remain with the Landlords as they manage the estates. Opportunities to identify particular estates and adaptations or changes to the infrastructure may be a subject to challenges on the historical housing stock because of the difficulty to retrofit different systems to existing housing stock i.e. there may be utilities under the ground that prevent those chambers from being sited. However, the council's Waste and Recycling Service indicated that there are likely to be different opportunities for different locations for what can be put in place.

10.3 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that they have been heavily involved in the wider use of URS across the borough, but the challenge continues as some sites have waste bins for URS whilst others do not have access to recycling systems that work. There continues to be historical challenges to make them work efficiently and, in some cases, URS have not worked because people from other nearby estates are using the URS leading to bin overflows. The council's Waste and Recycling Service does accept that they have to be more proactive with the URS in terms of further promotion and embed it as part of the supplementary planning guidance work. The Cabinet Member for Environment also suggests it's an important consideration that should be raised at the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum.

Recommendation 4

Reconsider clear bag provision for flats as an intervention to aid behaviour change on recycling

11.1 The Scrutiny Committee asked about the council's pink (now clear) recycling bags and what's happened to them. The perception of using pink recycling bags is viewed as a behaviour intervention to help with recycling. Some Scrutiny Members cited that their social media engagement on the topic of recycling with constituents led to conversations around how to access the pink recycling bags. Whilst Scrutiny Members clarified that a lack of pink recycling bags should not prevent or limit people to recycle, there was a strong indication that people were fixated on the pink recycling bags.

11.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment acknowledged that the current lockdown (as a result of the pandemic) disrupted residents from collecting the clear recycling bags from their local Idea stores and added that discussions with Tenancy Residency Associations (TRAs) and the opening of other community hub locations will provide coverage for people to collect recycling bags. There is also a broad agreement that behaviour need to change particularly the residents' mindset as the goal is now to recycle without bags. However, to implement this behaviour change it needs to factor in how the process can be made easy for residents, understand how it fits within their lifestyle and home environment. Simplicity can be viewed as to the degree of ease for a recycler to recycle waste taking on board factors such as the distance to recycling facilities, container design, time required, and knowledge about what and how to recycle. The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that this will form part of their key messaging (used on council leaflets, literature and promoted on council Website) and encouraging residents to recycle 'go loose' and place recyclable items directly into the bins without needing the council recyclable bags to engage with recycling activity.

Improving Mainstream Delivery through Pilot Project

Recommendation 5

Investigate and application small grants programme for small private developments along the lines of the SME energy efficiency programme

- 12.1 The Scrutiny Committee wanted to understand the cost and financial implications for the council on rolling the 'Flats Recycling Package' out more widely, the financial pressures on the council budget and if the scheme will be sustainable enough to roll out further. The Scrutiny Committee asked if the council considered making small grants available to small privately managed buildings (not part of council's major housing association) that may wish to undertake work and help the council improve its recycling targets.
- 12.2 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that they will be rolling out the 'Flats Recycling Package' to THH estates only in the next phase. They confirmed, the Mayors priority growth funding allocated £400,000 to deliver the expansion to those estates (approximately 20,000 properties) but commented that that council does not have the funding to replicate this across the borough although its expectation is that managing agents will need to use their own funding stream to implement the FRP unless the council is able to bid for other funding streams for this programme.
- 12.3 The council's Waste and Recycling Service further commented that savings can be achieved by reducing the level of contamination and paying for materials to be processed by a paying gate fee cost. This means that a greater level of contamination in recycling increases the cost for paying out for processing, so there is an incentive to focus on reducing contamination in dry recycling. Interventions such as reverse locked bins, residents understanding of what can be recycled as well as engaging managing agents / care takers to manage the waste and recycling bins on their estates including removing visible contamination before collection will help with delivering some savings.
- 12.4 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that they would investigate if and how the small grants programme can be applied to support smaller privately managed developments to help improve the council's target towards its recycling rates.

Recommendation 6

Ensure the council's Waste and Recycling Service factors in the cost element for Flats Recycling Package and demonstrate the value of the council's existing initiatives for example mixed-recycling-collection when undertaking cost-benefit analysis.

- 13.1 Resource London confirmed it partnered up with RSLs, Housing Associations and London councils to develop a diagnostic cost benefit tool for Flats Recycling Package with the aim of offering a comprehensive understanding of the cost benefit for rolling out the package. LBTH officers are represented on the advisory group and Tower Hamlets will be one of the first local authorities to pilot this scheme.
- 13.2 The council's Waste and Recycling Service commented that there is a general consensus amongst London Councils that this will cost the capital millions of pounds to roll out these schemes and interventions. They further expect London Councils to lobby the government for funding (given that there has been significant underfunding for a

number of years across England on the waste and recycling cause) as recycling not only produces financial but environment benefits for the Country.

Recommendation 7 Review the pilot of the food waste to flats scheme and the target audience. Develop plans so that council's Waste and Recycling Service is ready to go when this statutory duty comes in.

14.1 The Scrutiny Committee raised their concerns on food waste recycling, and they felt that the focus was framed on the wrong people. Whilst a pilot scheme took place a few years ago with housing association flats, the Scrutiny Committee commented that they never receive calls for food waste recycling from social tenants but rather from private owners or shared ownership property owners. The Scrutiny Member raised the issue that despite having several schemes in the borough, many young professionals (working in the city and believe in the green agenda) have complained that there is no food waste recycling in their dwelling. The Scrutiny Member pointed out that the council should be consulting resident association groups to generate interest and apply pressure on managing agents to allocate space for food waste recycling.

14.2 The Scrutiny Member also drew attention to a recent meeting they had with Peabody residents, almost all of whom were shared owners on Fish Island Village (near the Olympic Site). Some of the residents asked questions as to why they don't have any food waste recycling system. The Scrutiny Member felt that this indicated that something went wrong on the planning front. The Scrutiny Member was of the view that the council need to be firmer with housing association and move expediently on the food waste recycling agenda.

14.3 The council's Waste and Recycling Service confirmed that they are aware that the Government is looking to mandate separate collections for food waste recycling with funding being made available to implement this service under the new burdens' requirement. The council's Waste and Recycling Service accepted that this is currently not within the portfolio - food waste recycling for flats, but they intend adopt and deliver this provision as identified in the waste strategy 2019. They acknowledged that delays with legislation from DEFRA have slowed the progress of this provision. The council accepted that currently it does not have the required funding to expand into food waste recycling service but on the back of the consultation of waste strategy the service is aware that food waste recycling is an area that residents are keen to progress and expect to be delivered.

Influencing Residents' Behaviour Change to Increase Recycling

Recommendation 8 Schools programme, working closely with the young mayor to improve engagement with young people and support behaviour change on recycling.

15.1 The Scrutiny Committee noted that there had been good capture of insights on motivation factors for behaviour change. However, they wanted to understand further as to why it was difficult to engage with young people and achieve positive behaviour change for recycling. The Scrutiny Committee accepted that school children of a certain age are passionate and engaged with the environment and understand the science but they asked if there are insights about the change from children being highly motivated on recycling to a significant drop in motivation where young people are difficult to engage. The Scrutiny Committee questioned if it was a case of young people who are de-

motivated were never really motivated as children. In light of this situation, the Scrutiny Committee questioned as what the council and its partners know about young people and the key issues for young people leading to de-motivation and what the gaps are for young people.

15.2 The Scrutiny Committee heard from the council's Communication lead for Environment who accepted that it would be difficult to offer an explanation as to why the same group of young people highly motivated as school aged children then lose their motivation when they become older teenagers (without tracking these age groups from the beginning). The council Communications officer also accepted that the council possibly didn't do as much directive behaviour interventions with schools in a structured way i.e. tracking back 15 years ago, so that young people now potentially were not exposed to the behaviour interventions as the children who received this support. However, the council had previously undertaken campaigns on Sugar Smart, brief on Clean Air Quality targeting school children.

15.3 Schools acknowledged that there is a real passion amongst children for this. However, the communication officer was of the view that a call for action is not only for school children but their parents, ultimately this is where the change in behaviour for recycling will come from. Council Communication Service have considered taking forward using some of their digital assets that schools can use within their setting as well as home schooling.

15.4 The council's 2016 scrutiny report on 'Promoting a shared responsibility and removing barriers to improved recycling in the borough' outlined that (former) Veolia's Education Officer worked with schools; attending workshops and assemblies as well as setting up competitions for schools to compete on who recycles the most. The council previously used a recycling mascot attending schools and public events and getting young children involved with recycling through influencing behaviour early on and using this age group as catalyst to influence their parents. It also reported that Bywaters Material Recycling Facilities offered site visits to school children to have a hands-on educational experience about recycling.

Recommendation 9

Using Influencers of particular age groups (18-34) to engage, motivate and channel key messages to improve behaviour change on recycling.

16.1 Social norms often describe what a certain age group considers to be typical or desirable behaviour for certain situations, this can also be considered as a popular approach in which organisations can influence behaviour change. People are especially motivated to understand and follow the norms of a group that they belong to and care about.

16.2 The Scrutiny Committee heard that one of the key challenges for the council's Waste and Recycling Service was on improving its engagement and relationship with the 18-35 age group to support behaviour change on recycling. The Committee heard from the council's Communications Lead for Environment portfolio who explained that the engagement with this age group (18-35) has remained an enormous challenge and that this age group is one which they most lack (in terms of subscription) on the council communication channels. The communications officer felt that this age group would not just be getting its information or following council as there are growing number of other

influencers who may have stronger impact. Although COVID-19 has brought about increase request for local advice and information from this age group, in the main the council needs to improve on this. The communications officer also outlined that the council is trying to engage with Queen Mary's University (QMU) as they have a significant membership of this age group attending their premises for study. The council, previously involved QMU with the last couple of big clean up campaigns as well as trying to sign up newcomers at 2019's freshers' week to council communications. The council also intends to engage and connect with this age group.

16.3 Resource London identified (research carried out of the past five years)¹⁴ this age group 18-35 are the hardest to reach and are not sure the reasons for this. As children they are engaged but when young people move home to a big city or flat share their lives change inextricably with much more 'on the go' lifestyle and flat sharing can increase complexities.

16.4 This age group have a real distrust of getting information from official sources and they indicated that they don't want to hear from the councils as this is not where they get their information from. Resource London suggests that recruiting particular influencers on social media (that are trusted) by the age group and use those platforms to spread the message given the distrust of authorities. A report commissioned by SUEZ¹⁵ in 2015, also suggested that recycling rates are falling in areas where there is an increase in multi occupancy dwellings particularly as this correlates with this age group.

Media Campaigns to Support Resident Engagement with Recycling

Recommendation 10

Improving recycling education messaging so there is a common framework of understand from residents

17.1 One of the Scrutiny Member offered a comparative reflection on what they observed in Germany who have five receptacles to deal with different waste and recycling contents. Using this example as reference, the Scrutiny Member commented that almost 50% of residents within their ward were born overseas and possibly have different levels of education and understanding on standards for recycling. The Scrutiny Member believed that it was equally important to level up residents' education and understanding as to why recycle. The Scrutiny Member felt that it's just as important to explain to residents as to what happens to the recycled waste from when it enters the bin and include the overall benefits of recycling. The Committee felt it's important to get residents to understand the value of recycling and information appears to have two elements: one theoretical and one practical. A theoretical element informs people about the benefits of recycling and its impact on the environment, and the practical communication informs people how and where they can recycle. Moral incentives tends to happen when a type of choice is considered as the right thing to do. Furthermore, knowledge has to be more specific of how recycling affects the environment and affirms that act of recycling has a positive effect regardless how small. Environmental laws and regulations have a major impact on people's behaviour. Both the law and morality act as a catalyst to channel our behaviour,

¹⁴ <https://resourcelondon.org/>

¹⁵ https://www.circularonline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/SUEZ_At-this-rate-report.pdf

they both offer different motivation. The law acts by threats of sanctions if the regulations are flouted whereas morality functions by affording individuals with guilt or praise.

17.2 This issue was also reported within the 2016 council's recycling scrutiny report in that some residents assume that they were complying with council's rules by applying recycling behaviour based on their previous authority. Although, the 2016 scrutiny report recommended publicising recycling to residents through English Speaking for Other Languages (ESOL) session, it appears there is insufficient data to demonstrate the correlation between ESOL and improved recycling behaviour.

17.3 In 2011, the council collaborated with Veolia (contracted waste services) and commissioned a design team to develop a creative communications campaign using the strapline 'recycling makes sense in every language'¹⁶. Development of the campaign was established using the translation of community language and images proactively encouraging residents to recycle more. The Campaign routes included DLR Platforms, local streets, recycling collection vehicle, selected local bus routes, park and lamppost banners, public LCD screens and posters within Idea Stores; council's website, press releases including translations; local schools and events.

17.4 Veolia's contract specification also required them to publicise communications on recycling such as 'Lets Sort it, Right Stuff, Right Bin' campaign notifying residents to place waste in the correct bins as reducing contamination saves money with the strapline ' You might think it's just a bin but putting the wrong stuff in the wrong bin costs Tower Hamlets over £500k per year'. The campaign was formally launched in late 2015 and focussed on contaminated recycled waste in communal bins. There was some correlation between the campaign at the time and reports of an increase of 15% rise in acceptable loads (estates recycling) to the Material Recycling Facility (Bywaters) and an 8% in recycling tonnage.

Recommendation 11

Recycling performance targets to be more ambitious (stretched) not just realistic and resident contribution to be framed in how progress is being made a local level.

18.1 One of the Scrutiny Committee Members reflected on when they became a Ward councillor for the borough and at that time the council's recycling rates were extremely poor, so much so that the council undertook significant interventions which helped to increase performance beyond 20%.

18.2 Whilst the Scrutiny Committee appreciates the council's Waste and Recycling Service efforts in making genuine progress and acknowledged some of the difficulties that the team faced in driving improvements. The Scrutiny Committee did not agree with targets being set at realistic and they felt it needs to be more ambitious so that council is striving to reach it. To support this, the Scrutiny Committee felt that more pressure needs to be applied on housing associations to adopt the council's recycling strategy whilst simultaneously involve residents in the process to deliver broader behaviour change on recycling.

¹⁶ London Councils 'Helping London recycle more best practice case studies (May 2012)

18.3 The Scrutiny Committee Member used a live situation within their ward. Local residents wrote to the council's Waste and Recycling Service about missed collections cited their frustration with the lack of response from the service provider as well as threatening to stop recycling practices. Despite the threat, they continued to recycle in the hope that things will improve. The example was used to illustrate that genuine residents want to do the right thing but often these obstacles hinder the progress. The Scrutiny Committee felt that there remains continuing issues that need to be resolved despite bringing the waste and recycling service in house.

18.4 The Scrutiny Committee commented that if these are the most engaged people who get frustrated and are thinking of giving up recycling behaviour then there are a whole lot of other residents that are not bothered with recycling and just put their waste in the bin and as such the Scrutiny Committee is of the view that the council needs to improve their performance both in initial collection and follow up collection. Developing a regular communication dialogue culture of keeping residents informed of the progress on recycling as a result of their contribution will help to spread the ethos put recycling in a more sustainable footing.

1. Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meetings 2020/21 held to date:

Two meetings of the H&R Scrutiny Sub-Committee have been held during this financial year (2020/21): the first on 3rd November 2020 and the last meeting on **Wednesday 10th February 2021** where we considered:

- A report on Social Landlords Performance with One Housing Group in attendance.
- The revised *Homelessness Reduction Act – One Year On* report with strengthened recommendations for action – which the sub-committee approved.
- A presentation from Tower Hamlets Homes updating the sub-committee on the Leaseholder Service Improvement Plan.
- A presentation from the Head of Regeneration providing the sub-committee with a comprehensive update on regeneration activity across the council.
- A presentation from the Housing Companies Manager and the Divisional Director for Housing updating the sub-committee on the position with the 2 Housing Companies: Seahorse Homes and Mulberry Housing Society.

2. Actions arising from H&RSSC Meeting held on 10th February 2021:

The minutes of the meeting are still being drafted and any actions have yet to be set out.

3. The Items to be considered at the next meeting on the 15th April 2021:

Item	Actions/Recommendations
Policy Framework Scrutiny Social Landlords Performance Report	A report on PRP performance alongside the third invited PRP to attend (yet to be selected).
Open Spaces Action Plan	A progress report updating the sub-committee on the actions taken to deliver the plan.
Spotlight Employment Support – Covid-19 Response	A presentation on the Council’s response in supporting residents into employment who have been displaced by the Covid-19 pandemic, focussing on jobs and skills.
Spotlight Fire Safety Progress Report	Following on from the 2017 scrutiny review of fire safety, this item will update members on the Council’s work in remediating ACM cladding from the Borough’s high-rise blocks. Progress on the MHCLG’s External Wall Survey and an update on legislation will also be provided.

4. Other Actions:

In my capacity as Chair of the Sub-Committee, I have had the following meetings with key officers from across the council and related organisations:

Date	Officer(s)	Area Discussed
23/11/20	Andy Simpson – Head of SPP (Place)	Key strategic priorities across Housing and Regeneration
24/11/20	Abul Kalam & Riad Akbar (Housing Options)	Temporary Accommodation and the Customer Service Improvement Project
25/11/20	Anne Sutcliffe – Corporate Director (Place) & Sripriya Sudhakar – Head of Regeneration (Place)	Wider regeneration projects across the council
1/12/20	Nicola Klinger Housing Companies Manager	Background on the council's 2 housing companies – Mulberry Homes and Seahorse Homes
2/2/21	Pam Bhamra Director of Operations THCH and Chair of THHF	Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and its various sub-committees

I have one further meeting scheduled for Wednesday 3rd March with the (Acting) Divisional Director for Growth and Economic Development Vicky Clarke) to discuss the specific area of employment support that we could scrutinise at the April 2021 meeting.

Scrutiny Lead for Resources and Finance Written Update – OSC Meeting 1st March 2021

Activities undergone by Councillor Leema Qureshi since the last update include:

- ❖ Carried out a scrutiny challenge session on reviewing the Council's revised Idea Stores and Library Services and prepared a scrutiny report on the session
- ❖ 1-2-1s with Cllr Ronald discussed and understand the budget including the consultation around the budget.
- ❖ Represented OSC at the Grants Determination Sub-Committee and covered some key lines of enquiries on the items discussed.
- ❖ 1-2-1 with Interim Corporate Director Kevin Bartle, discussed the budget in detailed including what needs to be done to balance the deficit in certain areas and surplus in certain areas and how can we minimise the overspend without getting the deficit from the reserves.

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Scrutiny Lead for Health and Adults Scrutiny Written Update – OSC Meeting 1st March 2021

Activities undergone by Cllr Gabriela Salva Macallan since the last update include:

Chaired the [8th February 2021 Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meeting](#)

Reports taken at the meeting:

- **Adult Learning Disability Health Scrutiny Challenge Session Report**
The report from March 2020 had not been signed off by the last year's committee and therefore the previous Chair Kahar Chowdary returned to present the findings from the spotlight session of March 2020. The committee also heard an update from officers regarding ALD from March 2020 to December 2020, taking in the experience which had arisen from covid-19. The committee updated recommendations with the intention of supporting the strategic planning and development work for adults with a learning disability. The committee will agree a complete report at their next meeting in April.
- **Older People Care Homes – Support During the Covid-19 Pandemic**
The committee heard from officers and family members of service users. Concerns were raised regarding the substantial loss of life at the care homes. I would like to commend and thank the home care workers, care home workers and social workers for all their work during Covid-19.
- **Budget 21/22 -** The committee discussed the impact of cuts to services and asked for further information regarding the commissioning of Grant Thornton to review and make recommendations for the redesign of services

Meetings attended:

- 28th January 2021 Scrutiny Challenge Session on Council's proposal for the revised approach to Idea Stores and Libraries
- 2nd February, 2021 Online 'Virtual' Meeting, Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Board
- 10th February 2021 INEL JHOSC Committee Meeting
- 16th February 2021 COVID 19 Local Engagement Board
- 25th February 2021 1-2-1 with cabinet member Cllr Rachel Blake to discuss the Day Opportunities - day centres redesign SAV / HAC 003 / 21-22 and concerns around the impact of loss of staff to services

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Reference	Action	Assigned to	Scrutiny Lead	Due Date	Response
26/10 meeting	<p><u>1. Budget Monitor as at P5 for 2020/21</u> The Committee would require as part of the budget process in the next quarter a detailed breakdown of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid costs; • Recovery plans versus population vulnerability; and • What costs will not be reimbursed by Central Government. <p><u>2. Waste Service performance update</u> Next time, OSC wanted to see details of service improvement with particular reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in waste heading for reuse; street cleansing and bulk waste collections; • How it is now easier for people to report mis-collections through IT systems • How agency staff are used; and • Action plans for the West of the Borough e.g. Weavers; Spitalfields and Whitechapel. 	Kevin Bartle Dan Jones	OSC Chair OSC Chair & Scrutiny Lead for Env & Comm Safety	Next time this item returns to OSC	
23/11 meeting	<p><u>1. Strategic Performance Monitoring</u> Details on mitigation of poor performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of adults supported into employment by the WorkPath • Young people entering the youth justice system for the first time • Level of household recycling (quarterly audited) <p>In addition, that more detail should be provided within any future report</p> <p><u>2. COVID-19 update</u> OSC to review the Mayor’s response to the Committee’s COVID Review</p> <p><u>3. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Guide</u> Sought clarification on what OSC is able to do/act on as a part of the CCfA process</p>	Thorsten Dreyer OSC members Adam Boey	OSC chair	Before next meeting	<p>1. PDSQs’ responses provided before Cabinet on 25 Nov.</p> <p>2. OSC to provide comments to Chair</p> <p>3. Adam to work with Matthew Mannion to develop a communications approach for Members, including examples showing how and when to use CCfA.</p>

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Agenda Item 11.1

	<p>1. <u>COVID-19 Update</u> The committee requested clarification as to why E1 Health Centre and White Chapel Health Centre were exempt or not participating in the Vaccination 1st Wave Site for Tower Hamlets</p> <p>2. <u>WorkPath</u> To bring back and review WorkPath Services in next year's scrutiny WP</p> <p>3. <u>MTFS 2021 -24 (Budget Update</u> The Committee requested more information on how and why temporary accommodation costs have arisen and the extent to which this is COVID and non COVID related?</p> <p>The Committee requested more information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Rates • Covid Gap • What support is available from Government • Council Tax Support <p>The Committee agreed to hold a session (prior to the budget scrutiny meeting) on understanding business rates reset</p> <p>4. <u>AOB</u> The Committee welcomed the Executives response to the Call in - Change the Band 3 policy but didn't change the PRS policy. OSC to delegate responsibility to Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee to review the PRS policy and implications for waiting list in 6 months' time</p>	<p>Dr Somen Banerjee</p> <p>Vicky Clark</p> <p>Karen Swift</p> <p>Kevin Bartle</p> <p>Kevin Bartle</p> <p>Karen Swift</p>	<p>OSC Chair</p> <p>OSC Chair</p> <p>OSC Chair</p> <p>Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration on Scrutiny Sub-Committee</p>	<p>Before next meeting</p> <p>OSCs next year WP date TBC</p> <p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before 11 Jan 2021 Budget Scrutiny Meeting</p> <p>June 2021</p>	<p>The increase in costs was Covid related because the service accommodated 200 single homeless people into accommodation (mainly commercial hotels). For those who came in not all costs were recoverable from housing benefit. For example, provision of three meals a day and floating support in the commercial hotels to assist hotel management with supporting residents. Some residents were not entitled to benefits, so the cost of their accommodation was not recoverable. Furthermore, the nightly rate in the commercial hotels was above the eligible housing benefit amounts, so even for those who were entitled for housing benefit, the full cost was not recoverable.</p> <p>The Committee was provided (on 07.01.2021 the information via a briefing session which covered business rate reset. Business rates and council tax and Covid funding. Slides were circulated to O&S members and awaiting on the update slides for Covid funding.</p>
<p>07/01 Meeting</p>	<p><u>Business Rate Reset/ Council Tax Reset and Covid</u></p>				<p>The CTR caseload has increased from 29,268 in March 2020 to currently 31,626, it was as high as 32,482 in May 2020.</p>

	<p><u>Funding briefing</u></p> <p>1. On the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the Committee sort for clarification on how much of the increase in the cost of the scheme was as a result of the decision to suspend the income floor for self-employed claimants as part of bringing in line with suspension of universal credit</p>	<p>Roger Jones</p>	<p>O&S Committee</p>	<p>By next Meeting.</p>	<p>Overall, the cost of awarding CTR over the same period has increased from £27.9m to £31.4m. Some of this increase will be down to new claims and some will be down to changes in circumstances on existing claims such as and changes in income (an example of this would be the SEISS payments which will impact on self-employed claims) or changes to the number of people in the household.</p> <p>The DWP suspended the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) used in the assessment of Universal Credit (UC) in April 2020. Since March 2020 the number of CTR claims with Self Employed income has dropped from 857 to 838, but of these the number that are UC claims has increased from 443 to 573. All of these are no longer affected by the MIF.</p> <p>As a result of this the number of cases affected by the Council's MIF has decreased from 297 to 261 during the same period. Where we are advised that the MIF is causing hardship, we are looking at each case to assess whether S13a could be used to mitigate the effect of the MIF. To date this year, we have awarded £133,137.67 under Section 13a provisions to address the impact of the MIF being applied.</p> <p>We have had 358 applications so far and awarded in 213 cases and have a further 29 applications still being considered.</p> <p>We have also awarded £1.7m under the Hardship Fund to those who were assessed as still having something to pay.</p>
<p>11/01 meeting</p>	<p><u>Budget Scrutiny</u></p> <p>1. The Committee did not agree that population</p>	<p>Thorsten Dreyer</p>			<p>The published <u>Tower Hamlets Borough Profile</u> contains a dedicated section on population growth and change.</p>

	<p>growth was reflected proportionately across all age groups. The committee were of the view that the biggest increase was amongst 20's 30's and 40's age group and not children and older people and want to understand the what the drivers are.</p> <p>2. The Committee requested to understand the mapping around other services that will be stepping in to provide the service provided by Support for Learning Services</p>	<p>James Thomas</p>	<p>OSC Chair</p>	<p>Slides 7 and 8 provide an overview of population growth by age groups. The committee should note the distinction between increases in numbers and proportionate increase. While numbers in a group may have increased more in one group than another in absolute terms, the same may not be always true for the proportionate increase within each age groups.</p> <p>An example: The growth in 0-19 is higher as a proportion than the growth in adults as a proportion. The rate is higher in CYP so you would expect to see a proportionately larger increase in demand for their services even if the total demand for services in the 20 - 39 age group is bigger in absolute numbers.</p> <p>Slides 17 to 19 summarise the main factors driving population growth in the borough.</p> <p>The SLS will retain expertise in all of the areas of SEND that it currently has so will still be able to offer schools advice and training on speech and language, literacy, physical disabilities, assistive technology and to carry out its duties in relation to deaf and visually impaired children and young people.</p> <p>The Early Help Service works with the whole family and seeks to address the individual needs of every family member; the needs of individual family members are considered within the context of the broader family. Where there are children with specific needs including those children and Young People with SEND, the service will work with the family to address any concerns, advocating with schools and service providers as necessary ensuring that assessments are undertaken where necessary and appropriate. The Service will identify voluntary sector services who offer appropriate support and will sign post or refer as appropriate. The service has established relationships with the Parents Advice Centre, Children with Disabilities Team and the GP Care Group Social Prescribers who offer advice, support and interventions specifically to families where there is a child/child with SEND.</p>
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					<p>Strategic discussions will take place between the LA and health providers to ensure clear professional boundaries mean education and health services are appropriate and complementary. The following developments will also contribute to capacity which builds a more sustainable system over time, enabling schools to better meet their statutory duties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New guidance issued by LBTH in January 2021 (SEND threshold document) to support mainstream schools to meet the requirements of the SEN code of practice for children with different forms of SEND, inclusion specific requirements in the code for support for children with sensory impairments. This will be supported by THEP leadership consultants in their school improvement role with headteachers • Professional development for SENCOs now integrated into the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership middle leadership programme • Professional development offer for SEND inclusion for school staff and for governing bodies to be rolled out from the summer term 2021 to support schools to improve statutory compliance, meet Ofsted inspection requirements and best practice by implementing the guidance above • Creation of a new SEND Inclusion Adviser post tasked with support and oversight for inclusion in the borough's schools, ensuring implementation of the new guidance (above) and managing the SLS/LAS • Development of on-line SEND advice and guidance to improve awareness • Recruitment of a Rehabilitation Officer to support children and YP with visual impairment • Work with other services (including Early Help and the Children with Disabilities team) to ensure needs not requiring specialist teaching support are met for children with sensory impairments
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					<p>and their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development/training for council officers working with families of SI and PD, including Early Help, Area Inclusion Co-ordinators to improve support and sign-posting • Work with the local college provider to further develop support for SI pupils with sensory needs to enable pupils with SI needs do not need to leave the borough for post-16 education • Use of the Local Offer and SENCo training to signpost schools and parents to support for SPLD in assessing needs, support strategies and guidance • <i>Following a review of integrated therapies by health colleagues, commissioning of therapies will be increased, particularly Speech and Language Therapy, for those in nursery and primary school for the academic year beginning September 2021.</i> • Review the allocation of support within nationally recognised frameworks, informed by evidence of the educational effectiveness of the use of a range of approaches to support educational development such as group work which capitalises on the inclusion of children with SEND working with peers and using 1:1 interventions only when there is a clear educational benefit <p><i>Following the public consultation on the change of use of the High Needs Funding Block, 4 more posts (2 in HI, 2 in VI) were added back in to the structure to expand the level of statutory service provision. An increase in SI posts by 4 from the original staffing proposal</i></p> <p>The document was shared with the OSC Members via Democratic Services on 22.01.2021</p>
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	<p>3. The Committee asked if the Children’s Long-Term Recovery Plan (went to DfE) can be shared because it provided context of the savings for Children</p> <p>4. The Committee requested to understand more detail of the capital borrowing fund and if the treasury management strategy could be shared</p>	<p>James Thomas</p> <p>Kevin Bartle</p>			<p>The papers for this can be sourced from the Audit Committee 28.01.2021 here</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 213</p> <p>25/01 meeting</p>	<p><u>ASB</u></p> <p>1. Service to report back to scrutiny in March regarding consultation results on a pragmatic approach to ASB linked to nitrous oxide.</p>	<p>Ann Corbett</p>	<p>OSC Chair</p>	<p>01.03.2021</p>	<p>This is the summary of the result of the public consultation on the proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order to prohibit the possession or use of psychoactive substances (including nitrous oxide) and which is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to members of the public.</p> <p>The consultation ran from 4th January 2021 and closed on the 15th of February 2021. It was widely publicised on the council’s website, social media feeds, community platforms such as Online Watch Link (OWL), Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF), Safer Neighbourhood Board, (SNB) and Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels.</p> <p>The consultation received 2584 visitors and 948 formal responses to the consultation, one of the highest responses for any consultation the council has undertaken.</p> <p>Of those 948 responses, 97.5% (924) were residents and overall, 93.7% (886) were in favour of introducing a PSPO. 89.4% (889) thought the PSPO should be boroughwide and 88.5% (838) said they had witnessed nitrous oxide misuse and that it made them feel</p>

	<p><u>Borough Commander Spotlight</u></p> <p>2. Borough Commander to provide demographic data on FPNs issued, and details on where money recovered goes</p>	<p>BC Marcus Barnett</p>		<p>01.03.2021</p>	<p>unsafe.</p> <p>The proposal is being progressed and is planned to be decided upon by cabinet in April.</p> <p>In relation to the demographic data on FPN's issued we sadly cannot break down the figures to show each individual Borough Command Unit or London Borough. The data is held centrally by the Metropolitan Police Service and the breakdown for London shows us that the large majority of the fines have been issued to young men from 18 to 30 years old: 16% Asian, 12% Black & 70% White. Gender: 77% male, 1% not specified and 22% female.</p> <p>Chief Inspector Pete Shaw has tried to find out what happens in regards to the money from the fines issued, however at this point we are not able to identify this specifically with the response from our central command team being that they believe it goes back to the government for it to then be redistributed however they feel suitable.</p>