

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.35 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2017

**C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Mayor John Biggs	
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing)
Councillor Amina Ali	(Cabinet Member for Environment)
Councillor Rachel Blake	(Cabinet Member for Strategic Development & Waste)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Cabinet Member for Community Safety)
Councillor David Edgar	(Cabinet Member for Resources)
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Youth)
Councillor Joshua Peck	(Cabinet Member for Work & Economic Growth)
Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs	(Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services)

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Dave Chesterton	(Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader of the Conservative Group)
Councillor Andrew Wood	

Apologies:

Councillor Denise Jones	(Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Services)
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Officers Present:

Andrew Bate	(Senior Executive, Communications)
Janice Beck	(Head of Building Development, Children & Adults Resources)
Stephen Bramah	(Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)
Emily Fieran-Reed	(Service Manager, Community Cohesion, Engagement and Commissioning, Strategy, Policy and Equality)
Jim Glover	(Revenue Services)
Sharon Godman	(Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Partnerships)
Afazul Hoque	(Interim Service Manager, Strategy, Policy & Performance)
Martin Ling	(Housing Strategy Manager, Place)
Niall McGowan	(Housing Regeneration Manager)
Neville Murton	(Divisional Director, Finance, Procurement & Audit)

Christabel Shawcross	(Safeguarding Adults Board Chair LBTH)
Jackie Sullivan	Managing Director of Hospitals, Bart's Health Trust
David Tolley	(Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards)
Abad Uddin	(Graduate Management Trainee, Human Resources)
Zena Cooke	(Corporate Director, Resources)
Asmat Hussain	(Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer)
Debbie Jones	(Corporate Director, Children's)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Acting Corporate Director, Place)
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Matthew Mannion	(Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Denise Jones, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Tuesday 31 October 2017 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings subject to the following:
 - a. Agenda Item 5.12 – Recommendation 5 – it has been agreed that the delegation needs to be amended from the Corporate Director, Governance to the Acting Corporate Director, Place.

4. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions were noted in respect of Agenda Items:

- 5.2 – Local Safeguarding Childrens Board Annual Report.
- 5.7 – Approval of the allocation of S106 and CIL funding for projects at Wood Wharf Primary School and Additional 6th Form Places at Langdon Park & George Green Schools.
- 5.10 – Disposal of Land at Ailsa Street, Lochnagar Street and Bromley Hall Road
- 5.12 – Corporate Budget Monitoring Quarter 2

Written responses would be provided.

In addition Councillor Dave Chesterton, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provided an update to the Cabinet of its last meeting. He reported that a number of issues had been discussed including:

- Complaints annual report – including the need to ensure the website made it easy for residents to find relevant information and forms.
- A significant amount of time at the meeting had been focussed on spotlighting Children's Services and he thanked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services for her contribution to the meeting.

As a more general point, he expressed concern that officers were making use of the Forward Planning 'urgency' provisions more often than was appropriate and that he would continue to monitor this usage.

Finally, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered a Call-In in relation to the Individual Mayoral Decision regarding the Acquisition of Affordable Homes. The Committee had not referred the decision back to the Mayor to reconsider but it had submitted a number of questions to officers for a response.

The **Mayor** thanked Councillor Dave Chesterton for his contribution.

4.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2016/17

The Mayor introduced the Local Adult Safeguarding Board's Annual Report. He then introduced Christabel Shawcross the Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board who provided a summary of her Board's report.

She introduced herself to the meeting and welcomed the Mayor's acknowledgement of the importance of the work of the Board. She stated that, along with the Lead Cabinet Member, she had been able to bring fresh eyes to the annual report which she thought had been valuable.

She then took Cabinet through the highlights of the report and particular issues to note, including on improvements in data capture and reporting, the number of referrals and reviews, and how cases where risk had been identified had been tackled.

She then looked at issues that the Board would be examining in the next year such as prevention plans and work in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children's Board. She stated how important it was to work to reduce any abuse that was taking place. Finally she highlighted lessons learnt from previous cases where things went wrong.

During discussion, Cabinet heard about the issues that had been raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting the previous week. They also discussed a number of other issues including:

- Lessons learnt from recent reviews of the work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board that could be applied to adult safeguarding.
- The challenge of the transition from children's to adults' social care.
- It would be important to report back next year on recent discussions with the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and others.
- If there were any key points noted from the recent OFSTED report.

The Mayor welcomed the report. In particular he noted the importance of encouraging people to feel free to come forward to report concerns. He **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the annual report for the local Safeguarding Adults Board for 2016/17

5.2 Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2016-17

Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services introduced the report as a member of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Executive.

She provided a brief summary of the report. She explained that Stephen Ashley, the Chair had been brought in as there had been concerns about how well the Board was functioning. This move had been successful and the Chair was proving to be an active and positive leader of the Board.

Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs then took Members through the report. She explained that the report content and style had been reviewed following the OFSTED report and that it was important to refresh the content and focus. The key priorities for 2017/18 were noted and how this linked to the OFSTED Improvement Plan. It was noted that OFSTED had commended the work of the LSCB.

It was noted that changes to regulations meant that a LSCB was not specifically required in the future but that a version of partnership arrangements would be required.

In discussion Cabinet considered:

- The role of Councillors as Corporate Parents and the amount of information they should be receiving on those children.
- Whether the targets for the LSCB were stretching enough.
- Noting that delivery was critical against any targets that were set.
- How long term hospital care was being monitored.

- The work of the virtual school.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report, noting that it was in effect a new baseline for the future. He highlighted that the Council was investing to meet the needs of looked after children and that it was important to get this right.

RESOLVED

1. To note the annual report from the Local Safeguarding Children Board for 2016-17

5.3 Re-ablement Service Scrutiny Report & Action Plan

The **Mayor** introduced the report. He highlighted it as an excellent piece of Scrutiny work adding value to the services of the Council.

Jackie Sullivan from Barts NHS Trust introduced herself to the Meeting. She explained that there were specific actions for Barts in ensuring patients were appropriately cared for by the reablement service, for example by ensuring integrated care plans were developed early. One specific issue that was still being worked on was on ensuring consistency in the style of the medicine charts used.

During the discussion a number of issues were noted including the importance of tackling loneliness and in ensuring that staff considered a holistic view of each patient/service user. Finally the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Dave Chesterton, thanked everyone who had been involved in preparing the report and action plan.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report, thanked everyone including Barts for their work and **agreed** the recommendation as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee and agree the action plan in response to the report recommendations.

5.4 Universal Credit and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Support for Residents

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He explained that it set out how the Council planned to support those impacted by the introduction of the Universal Credit system. The Mayor's Tackling Poverty Fund had been established to provide support in these types of circumstances.

The report set out how support would be provided by the Council as well as from agencies. He noted that there had been a submission to the Cabinet meeting by the Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network in relation to this and he proposed that a meeting be arranged with them as soon as possible to go through the points they raised.

During discussion, Members noted that:

- The work being proposed was not in isolation from other advice support that was available to residents both internally and from external agencies.
- There were specific reason why a new internal advice services was being proposed as opposed to funding an external agency.
- The danger of residents getting into housing debts and the role of the Council in relation to that.

During discussion Members noted a number of issues including the work of the Tackling Poverty reference group, especially in relation to this proposal.

The **Mayor** thanked everyone for their contributions. He agreed that a meeting should be arranged as soon as possible with the Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network to discuss the points they raised in their submission. Turning to Paragraph 3.19 of the report he highlighted the proposed review of the in-house team after 1 year. He agreed with the idea of a review but requested that it be undertaken earlier. He **agreed** the recommendations in the report with those amendments.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the creation of an internal advice and support service for residents affected by the roll out of Universal Credit and self-employed residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Reduction.
2. To agree that specialist services should be commissioned as set out at paragraph 1.2 of the report from a range of independent agencies.
3. To delegate authority to Corporate Director of Resources, after consultation with Corporate Director of Governance, to enter into any necessary agreements following a procurement exercise for the specialist services
4. To note the budget from which staffing requirements were to be funded from the Tackling Poverty Fund.
5. That a meeting be arranged with the Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network and the Mayor.
6. That the proposed review of the in house advice team be undertaken within the first year of service.

5.5 Tower Hamlets Resident Support Scheme

Councillor Sirajul Islam, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report. He explained that it followed on from work examining existing support schemes which would be replaced by these proposals. He noted a particular recommendation was to bring school uniform grants into this scheme.

He thanked officers for their hard work on this issue, in particular Ellie Kershaw, Tackling Poverty Programme Manager.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report as a good news story, highlighting this as an area where many authorities were cutting their funding. He **agreed** the recommendations and thanked everyone for their work on the report.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the attached Residents Support Scheme policy to go out to consultation.
2. To agree the commissioning of a short term pilot to provide support immediately pending the outcome of the consultation.

5.6 Local Business Rates Relief Scheme

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He explained how the government had provided money to mitigate some of the impact of the rise in Business Rates. The report set out how businesses were able to make use of the relief scheme. He noted that, having considered feedback from the consultation exercise, the report proposed the exclusion of certain businesses from the scheme.

During discussion it was welcomed that the Council were making automatic awards to businesses and that these were planned to be sent out shortly after the Cabinet meeting.

The **Mayor** agreed the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the proposed scheme in Appendix A to the report, which was to award a total of £4,654,709 to 2,616 local business ratepayers. This represented 80% of the increase experienced by ratepayers as a result of the 2017 Revaluation.
2. To commence rebilling immediately to all qualifying local businesses.

5.7 IDF: Approval of the allocation of S106 funding and approval for the adoption of a capital budget in respect of the following projects: 1. Wood Wharf Primary School PID; 2. Additional 6th Form places - Langdon Park and George Green's School PID

Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, introduced the report. She explained that it was a positive report in enabling the expansion of much-needed school provision. This included fitting out a new two form entry primary school and providing additional sixth form places at two schools.

The report set out information for both projects including the specific funding requirements in each case as well demonstrating the overall need for school places. It was noted that at George Green School this work would also enable the replacement of some existing facilities as well as the expansion. The report also set out how the local communities would be able to access the new facilities.

During discussion Cabinet noted the free-school competition process that would need to be followed.

The **Mayor agreed** the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the allocation of £3m in Section 106 (S106) funding to the proposals set out in the "Wood Wharf Primary School" Project Initiation Document (PID), which was attached to the Cabinet report at Appendix A and Table 1.
2. To approve the allocation of £7.5m in Section 106 (S106) funding to the proposals set out in the "Additional 6th Form places - Langdon Park and George Green's Schools" Project Initiation Document (PID), which was attached to the Cabinet report at Appendix B and Table 1.

5.8 Amendment to Private Sector Renewal Policy 2016 - 2018

The **Mayor** introduced the report noting that it proposed small changes to the private sector renewal policy. Responding to questions, officers set out how the set procedures ensured that all applications to the scheme would be properly scrutinised.

The **Mayor** thanked officers and members and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To make the following amendment to the Private Sector Renewal Policy 2016-2018

Clause 4.1:**Change**

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants will continue to be available to eligible owner-occupiers, and private sector tenants and the maximum mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant is £30,000.

These grants are means tested except for the benefit for a disabled child under the age of 18.

Applications for discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant cannot be considered due to budget restrictions

To:

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants will continue to be available to eligible owner-occupiers and private sector tenants and the maximum mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant is £30,000.

These grants are means tested except for the benefit for a disabled child under the age of 18.

Applications for Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant above the maximum mandatory £30k limit will be considered on a case by case basis by the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) Grants Panel. Approval will be subject to it being identified that the client would not be able raise the necessary funds to complete the works which would then result in the adaptation not being carried out.

5.9 Cohesion Scrutiny Challenge Report Action Plan

Councillor Asma Begum, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, introduced the report which was following on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee challenge session.

She highlighted that this report contained an action plan setting out how the Council would be tackling the issues raised in the Scrutiny report.

During discussion members looked at the work was being undertaken to encourage mixing between cultures especially at schools. Officers explained that there was a lot of activity on this with a specific project being rolled out across local schools. It was agreed that this was a particularly important issue to tackle.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report. He confirmed he considered this a very serious issue that required the Council's focus and that he would be keeping a close eye on progress. He agreed the recommendations set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report of the OSC, and agree to the action plan in response to the report's recommendations.

5.10 Disposal of Land at Ailsa Street, Lochnagar Street and Bromley Hall Road E14

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report which related to the sale of Council owned land to support redevelopment of the Ailsa Wharf area. He thanked officers who had worked hard to get the greatest benefit from this site in negotiation with the other interested parties.

During discussion concerns were noted about ensuring Londoners were given the first opportunity to buy properties in the scheme and questions were also asked as to how current users of the site were being managed.

It was noted that Recommendation 4 should be amended to delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Governance, following consultation with the Corporate Director, Place, to enter into necessary legal agreements.

The Mayor noted the exempt appendices, agreeing the reasons for restriction as follows:

By virtue of section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, two appendices in this report are exempt as they contain Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority handling the information). Specifically, the appendices contain land valuation information and the terms of the disposal; the premature publication of this information could prejudice the Council in negotiating the transaction. In all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the appendices as it could jeopardise the Council's financial position when negotiating the transaction with the developer.

The **Mayor agreed** the recommendations as set out subject to the amendment stated above.

RESOLVED

1. To agree that the land and buildings at Ailsa Street, Lochnagar Street and Bromley Hall Road E14, as shown on the plan at Appendix A to the report, are surplus to the Council's requirements.

2. Having noted the valuation information set out in the exempt Appendix C to the report, agree to the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the land to Ailsa Wharf Development Ltd on the terms set out in the report and exempt Appendix B to the report.
3. To authorise the Acting Corporate Director, Place, to agree to any non-material variations to the terms and the precise boundaries of the land to be sold in order to implement the recommendations above.
4. To authorise the Corporate Director, Governance, following consultation with the Acting Corporate Director, Place, to enter into the necessary legal agreements required to implement the recommendations above.

5.11 Update of the Strategy for the Identification of Contaminated Land 2017

Councillor Amina Ali, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced the report updating the Council strategy on identifying and managing contaminated land. She highlighted how important this was in protecting residents.

The **Mayor** considered the report and noted how important it was to protect residents from issues that can be created by contaminated land. He **agreed** the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Tower Hamlets Strategy for the Identification of Contaminated Land 2017.
2. To delegate to the Acting Corporate Director, Place authority to make any amendments to the policy deemed necessary following consultation with the Corporate Director, Governance.

5.12 Corporate Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2

Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report on the Council's financial position up to the end of September 2017. He noted the projected underspend on the General Fund and on the Housing Revenue Account. He also noted that there were a number of uses of the reserves that had been planned and how officers were working to tackle identified overspends. The Outturns that were projected were good.

For future reports he suggested it was worth expanding information about how the council dealt with planning for inflation.

During discussion it was agreed that more information would be useful about persistent underspends, especially where that could indicate that residents were unaware of certain services.

The **Mayor agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the Council's forecast outturn position against Revenue and HRA budgets agreed for 2017-18, based on information as at the end of September as detailed in Sections 3-7 of the report.
2. To note the summary savings position.
3. To endorse management action to achieve savings.
4. To note the position on the Mayoral Priority Budget.

5.13 Mayor's Individual Executive Decisions - List of Recently Published Decisions

The **Mayor** introduced the report noting a recent Individual Mayoral Decision on the Acquisition of Affordable Homes. It was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had submitted a number of questions in relation to the decision and these had been responded to by officers.

The **Mayor** noted these questions and the concerns that had been raised and he discussed the reasons for the urgency around why the report had been presented as an Individual Mayoral Decision.

RESOLVED

1. To note the Individual Mayoral Decisions set out in the Appendix to the report.

6. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**RESOLVED**

1. 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.

8. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

9.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

10. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil items.

10.1 Ocean Site H - Revised Capital Estimate

The **Mayor** introduced the report and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

11. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 7.37 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS