

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS****MINUTES OF THE CABINET****HELD AT 5.34 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2019****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 Rachel Blake	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Air Quality)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities)
Councillor Amina Ali	(Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit)
Councillor David Edgar	(Cabinet Member for Environment)
Councillor Danny Hassell	(Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People)
Councillor Denise Jones	(Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing)
Councillor Candida Ronald	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector)
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman	(Cabinet Member for Work and Economic Growth)

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Peter Golds  
Councillor Abdal Ullah

**Officers Present:**

Andrew Bate	(Senior Executive, Communications)
Richard Baldwin	(Divisional Director, Children's Social Care)
Stephen Bramah	(Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)
David Courcoux	(Head of the Mayor's Office)
Sharon Godman	(Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)
Afazul Hoque	(Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
Asmat Hussain	(Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer)
Debbie Jones	(Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Alan McCarthy	(Asset Strategy Capital Delivery & Property Services)
Tom McCourt	(Strategic Director)
Neville Murton	(Acting Corporate Director, Resources)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Acting Corporate Director, Place)
Warwick Tomsett	Joint Director, Integrated Commissioning
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)

Matthew Mannion (Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, Governance)

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

During the meeting the Mayor agreed to change the order of business in order to accommodate requests to speak. He therefore took agenda item 6.3 (Adopt London East – Regional Adoption Agency – Business Case) before Agenda Item 6.1 (The Council's 2019-20 Budget Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-22).

All other business was taken in order. To aid clarity, the minutes are presented in the order the items appeared on the agenda.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **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 Wednesday 9 January 2019 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor made a number of announcements to those present:

- Due to the cold weather the Council had activated its emergency plans to support rough sleepers and details were on the Council's website.
- The Council had recently launched the building of 24 new council homes on Jubilee Street.
- The Council's Brexit Commission was due to release its report soon.

### **5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### **5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions**

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) presented the Committee's response to the Mayor's draft budget proposals.

Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions, and officer responses, were also submitted in relation to Agenda Items 6.2 (Fees and Charges 2019/20), 6.3 (Adopt

London East – Regional Adoption Agency – Business Case) and 6.4 (An Integrated Information and Advice Plan for Tower Hamlets).

All the above were considered during discussion of the relevant agenda items.

In addition, Councillor Abdal Ullah, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided an update on OSC's recent work. At their last meeting a number of issues had been considered including:

- Community Safety and the work the council and partners were doing in this area. A scrutiny report with recommendations for action would follow in the near future.
- A valuable discussion on the Prevent work being undertaken by the Council.
- A follow up on the budget scrutiny debate that had taken place on 14 January 2019. Recommendations were being presented to the Executive to consider.
- A challenge session on Communications looking at examples of best practice and on how residents can help shape policies.

Finally he requested that the Mayor consider extending invites to Scrutiny Leads at more Executive led events such as on the Housing Strategy recently.

The **Mayor** thanked Councillor Abdal Ullah for his update and agreed to look to include Scrutiny Leads on more occasions.

## **5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Nil items.

## **6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **6.1 The Council's 2019-20 Budget Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-22**

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the report. She provided the meeting with a summary of the financial challenges the Council faced, in particular in relation to the cuts in support from central government.

However, despite this the Council was still looking to invest in key areas that local residents had identified in the recent consultation exercise including around issues such as tackling anti-social behaviour and gangs whilst looking to support young people and vulnerable residents.

Finally she highlighted a few changes from the draft budget including on the business rate levy and empty homes premium.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report and the investments the Council was able to make in areas such as maintaining the resident support scheme and free

school meals. He thanked Overview and Scrutiny for their scrutinising of the budget and he noted their submitted report. He then **agreed** the recommendations set out including to submit the proposed budget to Council for final consideration.

## **RESOLVED**

1. To agree a General Fund Revenue Budget of £342.560m subject to any changes arising from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement to be referred to Full Council for consideration.
2. To agree the Council Tax (Band D) at £1,019.67 for 2019-20 to be referred to Full Council for consideration.
3. To authorise the Corporate Director, Resources after consultation with the Mayor and Lead Member of Resources to make any changes required to the budget following the final settlement announcement in February.
4. To approve the revised Capital Programme for the period to 2028-29; as detailed in Appendix 9A-D to the report and adopt the associated capital estimates
5. To approve the draft 2019-20 Housing Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 8A to the report.
6. To approve the draft 2019-20 Management Fee payable to Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) of £31.105m as set out in Table 6 of the report.
7. To note that under the Management Agreement between the Council and THH, THH manages delegated income and expenditure budgets on behalf of the Council. In 2019-20, THH will manage delegated income budgets totaling £86.875m and delegated expenditure budgets of £27.719m.
8. To note the following matters:

### **General Fund revenue Budget for 2019-20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-20 to 2021-22**

The initial budget proposal and Council Tax for 2019-20 together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix 1A. Note the decision made by the Mayor in Cabinet to participate in the London Wide 75% Business Rates Retention pilot scheme.

Note the decision of the Mayor in Cabinet in January 2018 to increase the Council Tax empty homes premium from 50% to 100%, which comes into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. This follows the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 which allows Councils to increase the

current maximum empty homes premium set at 50%, to 100% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

### **Budget Consultation**

The outcome of consultation with business ratepayers, residents and other stakeholders as set out in Section 3.13 and Appendix 10

### **Funding**

The funding available for 2019-20 and the indications and forecasts for future years as set out in Section 3.4.

### **Growth and Inflation**

The risks identified from the potential growth and inflation commitments arising in 2019-20 and future years as set out in Section 3.5 and Appendix 3.

### **Savings**

New proposed saving items to be delivered in 2019-22 as set out in Section 3.6 and Appendix 4 of the report.

### **Financial Risks: Reserves and Contingencies**

The strategic budget risks and opportunities as set out in Section 3.7 and the assessment of risk as detailed in Appendix 6.

### **Reserves and Balances**

The reserves policy and proposed approach to the strategic use of reserves as set out in Section 3.8 and the projected movement in Reserves as detailed Appendix 5 and 7.

### **Schools Funding**

The position for schools' funding including the Dedicated Schools Grant as set out in Section 3.9.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

The position of the Housing Revenue Account; proposals for Rent and Tenanted Service Charge Setting 2019-20 and Equalities impact assessment set out in Section 3.10 and Appendix 8

### **Capital Programme**

The Capital Programme to 2018-29; including proposed revisions to the current programme as set out in Section 3.11 and detailed in Appendix 9.

9. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment / specific equalities considerations as set out in Section 4 of the report.

## **6.2 Fees & Charges 2019/20**

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the annual report setting out the fees and charges to be agreed by the Mayor in Cabinet. She noted the target of increasing income to

the Council from fees and charges and that most increases were in line with inflation measures.

The **Mayor** welcomed the report and in particular noted the new diesel surcharge created as one action, amongst a number, to improve air quality in the borough. He noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and then **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

## **RESOLVED**

1. To approve the proposed increase to discretionary fees and charges by a minimum of CPI (2.4%) or RPI (3.3%) rounded up to the nearest 5p, 10p etc., with effect from 1st April 2019
2. To approve proposed increases above CPI 2.4% for the following areas;
  - Meals for Social Care Clients
  - Parental Engagement and Support
  - Parking
  - Environmental Commercial Services
  - Local Land Charges
  - Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages
  - Idea Store and Idea Store Learning
3. To approve New Charges proposed in the following areas;
  - Sports & Physical Activity - Duke of Edinburgh's Award
  - Parking - permits relating to diesel surcharge
  - Environmental Commercial Services - food safety re-inspection
  - Strategic Planning – CADAP fee
  - Development Management – pre-application advice
  - Infrastructure Planning – development viability
  - Street naming and numbering
  - Idea Store (Local History Library & Archives) - image reproduction
4. To consider the detailed list of proposed changes within
  - Health, Adults & Community as set out in Section 3.2 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report.
  - Children's Services as set out in Section 3.3 of the report and Appendix 2 to the report.
  - Place as set out in Section 3.4 of the report and Appendix 3 to the report.
  - Governance as set out in Section 3.5 of the report and Appendix 4 to the report.
  - Resources as set out in Section 3.6 of the report and Appendix 5 to the report.
5. To note the revised Statutory fees and charges as set out in Appendix 6 to the report with effect from 1st April 2019.

6. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment/specific equalities considerations as set out in Section 4 of the report.

### 6.3 Adopt London East - Regional Adoption Agency – Business case

Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People introduced the report. He explained that the government had mandated a move towards regional adoption agencies and this report therefore presented proposals to go into a regional agency with neighbouring authorities. The business case had been re-examined since Waltham Forest had withdrawn from the partnership and it was still considered a viable proposition. It should be noted that medium term savings were predicated on a number of changes including a reduction in inter agency fees and the reduced cost of placements.

John McLoughlin, UNISON Branch Secretary, made a presentation to the meeting. He noted a number of points including:

- That this was a government requirement but that there was local control on how the changes were undertaken.
- Care was needed on the business case.
- It was important to protect the terms and conditions of staff. TUPE rules must be protected but there were concerns the report implied this would not be the case due to the potential relocation.

The **Mayor** considered the issues raised and noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses. In particular he noted that the recommendations did state that staff consultation would be taking place. He proposed an amendment to the recommendations to require that he and the Lead Member be consulted before the TUPE process or staff consultation exercise began. With that change, he **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

### RESOLVED

1. To agree and sign off the Tower Hamlet's specific content in the Adopt London East Business case, specifically:
  - a. Agree to contribute the current adoption services budget for Tower Hamlets and a one-off transitional payment of £42,684 to cover additional costs, as laid out in the financial section to fund the RAA in year 1. Budgets will be reviewed and agreed annually from year 2 onwards in consultation with the RAA partnership board
  - b. Subject to consultation with the Mayor and Lead Member for Children, Schools and Young People, agree the TUPE transfer of staff in scope on or before 1st July 2019 and undertake a consultation with staff impacted by the transfer of the service. NB – The specifics of the transfer process will be undertaken in consultation with both staff and trade unions to ensure that the transfer does not negatively affect terms and conditions of employment

- c. Agree the other overarching principles in the document. The partnership will use these principles to design the necessary functions of the RAA between now and the go-live date.
  - d. Authorise the Corporate Director, Children and Culture to enter into all relevant agreements and other documentation in order to facilitate the Council's involvement in the RAA as referred to in this report.
2. To note that an Equalities Impact Assessment is being undertaken in respect of the impact across all of the local authorities involved as set out in the business case.

#### **6.4 An Integrated Information and Advice Plan for Tower Hamlets**

Councillor Denise Jones, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, introduced the report. She explained that the recommendations were asking for an extension to the existing contract on advice and advocacy for health and social care to better align its end date with the Clinical Commissioning Group and thus allow a full review and redesign of the information and advice service across the Council, CCG and partner organisations.

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and Officer responses welcomed the report and agreed the recommendation as set out.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. To agree the recommendation in this paper and authorise an eight month extension for the Information, Advice and Advocacy contract (AHWB4183) to align the end date with other commissioned services, and in doing so, allow for an appraisal and re-design of the various information and advice services in the borough to inform a new integrated information model and offer.

#### **6.5 Grant of a lease for first floor of Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Heath Road E2 0HL**

The **Mayor** introduced the report proposing the granting of a lease for use of the first floor of Bethnal Green Library. He welcomed the refurbishment of the site and noted the community focus of the proposed user of the site and the potential benefit to the bio-science research community in this area. He noted the exempt appendix and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

**RESOLVED**

1. To agree to the grant of a 7 year lease to Barts NHS Trust for the rent commencing at £60,000 pa.
2. To delegate to the Acting Corporate Director of Place in liaison with the Corporate Director Governance, authority to enter into any detailed negotiations and to enter into the legal documentation in order to give effect to the decision.
3. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment / specific equalities considerations as set out in Paragraph 4.1 of the report.

**7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

Nil items.

**8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Nil items.

**9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

Nil items.

**10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

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

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 6.42 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS