

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.35 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 26 JUNE 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 Planning, Air Quality and Tackling Poverty)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit)
Councillor Amina Ali (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing)
Councillor David Edgar (Cabinet Member for Environment)
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 Sufia Alam
Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Andrew Wood (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Apologies:

Councillor Asma Begum (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities)
Councillor Danny Hassell (Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People)

Others Present:

Vivianne Akinremi Deputy Young Mayor and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
Jaami Barry (Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets)
Ahmed Duale (Deputy Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets and Youth Cabinet Member for Environment)
Nadia Hussein (Deputy Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets and Youth Cabinet Member for Community)
Muhsin Mahmud (Deputy Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets and Youth Cabinet Member for Communications)

Officers Present:

Andrew Bate (Senior Executive, Communications)
Mark Baigent (Interim Divisional Director, Housing and

Stephen Bramah	Regeneration) (Deputy Head of the Mayor's office)
David Courcoux	(Head of the Mayor's Office)
Sharon Godman	(Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance)
Asmat Hussain	(Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer)
Debbie Jones	(Corporate Director, Children and Culture)
Ralph Million	(Senior Strategic Asset Manager, Place)
Neville Murton	Corporate Director, Resources)
Denise Radley	(Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)
Amy Sherman	(Strategy and Policy Officer)
Ann Sutcliffe	(Corporate Director, Place)
Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Matthew Vaughan	(Political Advisor to the Conservative Group, Democratic Services, LPG)
Charles Griggs	(Head of Community Safety)
Matthew Mannion	(Head of Democratic Services, Governance)
Rushena Miah	(Committee Services Officer)
Nnenna Onochie-Oputa	(Modern.gov Project Officer)

AGENDA ORDER

During the meeting the Mayor agreed to vary the order of business to take Agenda Item 6.1 (Spitalfields and Banglatown Community Governance Review) before Item 5 (Overview and Scrutiny). For clarity the minutes are presented in the order the items appear on the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Asma Begum (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities)
- Councillor Danny Hassell (Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People)
- Councillor James King (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillors Amina Ali, David Edgar and Motin Uz-Zaman all declared Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in relation to Agenda Item 6.2 (Urgent Structural Works – Brewster House and Maltings House) and left the room for the duration of that item.

The Mayor and Councillor Sirajul Islam noted 'other interests' in the same agenda item as family members were leaseholders. They took part in discussion of that item.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 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 at the meeting including that the final OFSTED inspection had taken place and, whilst general feedback was encouraging, the final report would be published next month.

He also highlighted a number of recent awards for housing services including for East End Homes and Swan Housing and a shortlisted nomination on energy efficiency.

He then introduced Jaami Barry the recently elected Young Mayor for the Borough. Jammi Barry addressed Cabinet. He talked about his proud background and family. He then took Cabinet through his vision for how he could support young people in the Borough helping them become healthier, happier and safer.

He then introduced his team of Deputy Mayors who all also addressed Cabinet on their own portfolio responsibilities.

- Vivian Akinremi on her goal of improving work to tackle mental health issues in young people.
- Muhsin Mahmud on the importance of improving the Council's communications with younger residents.
- Ahmed Duale on increasing environmental understanding among young people.
- Nadia Hussein working to develop links between different communities.

The Mayor thanked them all for their presentation and highlighted his desire to work closely with the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayors.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

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

- 6.1 (Spitalfields and Banglatown Community Governance Review)
- 6.4 (Mudchute Farm, Park and allotments)
- 6.5 (Tower Hamlets CCTV Approach)
- 6.7 (Contracts Forward Plan 2019/20 – Quarter One)

The questions, and officer responses, were considered during discussion of the relevant agenda items.

In addition, Councillor Sufia Alam, Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided an update on the recent work of the Committee. She reported that the Members had recently undertaken their work planning day where they had identified a number of key areas to scrutinise including waste contracts, crime and anti-social behaviour and liveable streets.

She then provided an update on their Committee meeting earlier in the week. She reported on a number of items for discussion including:

- An update on work to support the night-time economy.
- A spotlight session with the Mayor looking at his priorities for the year ahead.
- A good discussion on the Children's Services Improvement Plan with Councillor Danny Hassell with encouraging information provided in how the service was developing.

She also provided an update on the Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting which had taken place the previous evening. There had been a useful discussion about proposals to close Raines School and the need to ensure good communication between the Council and parents. There had also been a discussion on school improvement in general and how to support teachers' professional development.

The **Mayor** thanked her for her update.

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

Nil items.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Spitalfields and Banglatown Community Governance Review Update

The Cabinet considered the report of Will Tuckley, Chief Executive, regarding the Spitalfields and Banglatown Community Governance Review Update. The Chief Executive explained that the council had received a valid petition last summer requiring the Council to conduct a governance review to determine whether a parish council should be established.

As part of that process the Council had submitted its Draft Recommendation (to reject the proposal for a parish council and instead look to strengthen existing forms of governance) to a consultation exercise which completed in late May 2019. The report set out the results of that consultation for Member review.

The Mayor invited lead campaigners for a parish council to speak on the report findings. A summary of points raised included that:

- Campaigners were disappointed with the consultation exercise and rejected the findings. The authenticity of the paper responses was challenged.

- They believed that residents had been misled about the size and sources of funding required in setting up a parish council.
- They described 'Banglatown' as being a 'political football' that connected politics to race and fostered division.
- It was claimed valid analysis by the campaigners had been rejected by the council.
- Campaigners urged the Mayor to reject the report and defer the decision pending independent expert advice.
- Campaigners argued that the current administration was not functioning well and the creation of a parish council would have tackled issues around austerity.
- A parish council could have brought residents together and allowed them to take ownership of local services rather than having to rely on the Member Enquiries system.
- Campaigners urged the Council to hold a referendum to determine whether a parish council should be set up.
- They suggested that Parish councils were generally seen as a positive community asset.
- Petitioners queried why the establishment of a parish council faced such strong opposition in Tower Hamlets when they were seen in a positive light by the rest of the country, including the mainstream political parties whose manifesto's endorsed the devolution of powers.

During discussion Councillor Andrew Wood, Leader of the Conservative Group, questioned whether parish councils created a community cohesion impact. The Mayor then confirmed he was open to the principle of a parish council and that no group 'Whip' was in place in respect of how councillors would vote at Council. He noted the pre-decision scrutiny questions and officer responses.

The Mayor thanked speakers for their comments and reminded Cabinet and members of the public that the creation of a parish council was a Council decision. The Chief Executive said he would take into consideration the comments heard at Cabinet and findings from the consultation in his report to Council on 17 July 2019.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report.

6.2 Urgent Structural Works-Brewster House and Malting House

Councillor Sirajul Islam, Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report. He explained that this report set out plans for significant structural improvement works which were needed on these housing blocks. It was complex work which would take eighteen months to complete. The report set out the details of how the works would be undertaken. He acknowledged that this was likely to be extremely disruptive to residents and mitigation measures were also set out.

The report set out the likely costs to leaseholders. He accepted these were large sums which would prove challenging to some leaseholders. The Council was proposing to operate a buy-back scheme for those who wished to make use of it. A number of other options were also set out.

During discussion Members heard from a number of residents who had concerns over the works and the large charges they were now facing. This was placing them in a stressful situation and many were elderly so were finding it difficult to cope.

Members also noted that consultation had taken place with residents and that the Council considered that the works had to take place but was doing what it could to put a limit on the impact.

Following the discussion the **Mayor** noted the exempt appendix and then agreed to defer a decision on undertaking the works to allow time for further meetings with residents to explore options. However, he agreed that the buy-back scheme should be introduced to help residents who wish to make use of it.

RESOLVED

1. To note that officers will explore the voluntary buy-back of leasehold properties in the two blocks, under the existing budgeted borough-wide buy-back programme, with potential costs estimated at c.£9.6m.
2. To agree to the introduction of two additional borough-wide leasehold service charge payment options as set out in sections 9.5 - 9.7 of the report.
3. To defer agreement of the following three recommendations subject to further discussion – with final decisions to be taken by Individual Mayoral Decision if required:
 - a. To agree that capital resources of £8,083,081 are made available within the five year HRA Capital Programme to fund the works (Option 1) and the services associated with delivering the works, and agree to adjust the five year programme accordingly.
 - b. Agree to the award of the works contract to Wates in the sum of £6,276,605.50. Wates has been procured via the Council's Better Neighbourhoods Works Framework.
 - c. Agree to formally consult leaseholders and to recharge them for their portion of the cost of the works.

6.3 Children's Services Improvement Programme, Quarterly Progress Report (Quarter 4- 2018/19)

The **Mayor** introduced the report and provided a summary of the process to date. He noted that the final OFSTED report was due in July but that this update did provide good evidence of the progress that had been made.

He welcomed the report and **agreed** the recommendations.

RESOLVED

1. To endorse the progress made in delivering the Children's Services improvement programme.
2. To agree the next steps in the improvement journey which will be updated on in the next report.

6.4 Mudchute Farm, Park and allotments, Pier Road E14, Grant of long lease

The **Mayor** introduced the report proposing a long lease for Mudchute Farm, park and allotments. He noted that the aim of the proposals was to create certainty for all parties involved although he noted there were strong views on the issue.

He heard presentations from allotment members expressing concern both about the terms and nature of the allotment's sub-lease and also in relation to internal allotment society disagreements which they argued meant the society was not in a position to sign the lease.

During discussion it was noted that the Council had no role in the internal arrangements of the society.

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officers responses and, whilst noting the strong feelings expressed, **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree to accept a surrender of the lease dated 8 October 2004 held by the Mudchute Association, which covers Mudchute Farm and Park.
2. To agree that simultaneously with the surrender, the Council will grant a new lease to the Mudchute Association for a term of 99 years at a peppercorn rent, covering the same area and on the main terms set out in paragraph 3.9 of the report.
3. To note that simultaneously with the above, the Mudchute Association will grant the Isle of Dogs and District Allotments Society a sub-lease, also for a term of 99 years (less one day) at a

peppercorn rent and on the main terms set out in paragraph 3.11 of the report.

4. To agree to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place to agree the remaining terms of the lease and minor variations to the terms set out in this report.
5. To note that the Council gave notice of its intention to dispose of the open space, by way of the grant of a long lease, and that no objections were received by the closing date of 13 December 2018.
6. To note the equalities considerations as set out in section 4 of the report.

6.5 Tower Hamlets CCTV Approach

The **Mayor** introduced the report setting out the Council's approach to the use of CCTV cameras.

During discussion a number of points were noted including:

- Suggestions the use of cameras should be looked at in terms of the night time economy.
- Residents were able to suggest locations for cameras which would be evaluated against the criteria for use.
- That cameras were more useful in detection and investigation of crime than in deterrence.
- Cameras did not have to be fixed in one location but could be temporary.
- Resident engagement was important to this process.
- The Council could also work with local businesses, but it was important their cameras were of good quality.

The **Mayor** noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officers responses and **agreed** the recommendations as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To note the contents of the report including the findings from the literature review, stakeholder engagement and local data analysis.
2. To agree to the eighteen recommendations contained at the conclusion of the report in paragraph 3.6.

6.6 Capital Programme Approvals

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the report. She noted that a number of specific schemes were set out in the report seeking approval for capital expenditure. She also noted the proposal to allow capital reports to be presented to Cabinet when required rather than just within the quarterly budget monitoring reports.

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

RESOLVED

1. To adopt the listed pipeline schemes as set out in Appendix A to the report into the Council's approved capital programme
2. To agree that approval to proceed to award contracts for works and services be delegated to the Corporate Director, Place in consultation with the Corporate Director, Governance, subject to tenders being within the capital estimate amount and scheme PIDs being approved at Capital Strategy Board.
3. To note and approve the increased scheme costs for the Interim Depot Provision (item 4.6 in the report)
4. To adopt proposals for capital reports to be presented to Cabinet in-between finance quarterly monitoring as required, following approvals gained at the Capital Strategy Board.

6.7 Contracts Forward Plan 2019/20 - Quarter One

Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector, introduced the report on the contracts forward plan. She highlighted that this was an opportunity for Members to request full reports on contracts before they proceeded to award.

During discussion questions were asked in relation to the financing and pupil projections of the proposed London Dock Secondary School. The **Mayor** agreed that a report would be required to Cabinet on that particular contract.

The Mayor noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses and **agreed** the amended recommendations.

RESOLVED

1. That a report on P5562 (Construction of London Dock Secondary School) be presented to Cabinet in advance of contract award.
2. That all other contracts set out in Appendix 1 to the report may proceed to contract award after tender.
3. To authorise the Divisional Director, Legal Services, to execute all necessary contract documents in respect of the awards of contracts referred to at Recommendation 2 above.
4. To note the procurement forward plan 2019-22 schedule detailed in Appendix 2 to the report and identify any contracts about which further

detail is required in advance of the quarterly forward plan reporting cycle.

6.8 Nomination to Outside Bodies

The **Mayor** introduced the report setting out proposed appointments to outside bodies. He **agreed** the recommendation as set out.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the nominations to outside bodies as shown in Paragraph 3.3 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 7.53 p.m.

MAYOR JOHN BIGGS