

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS  
MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD AT 6.35 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 18 MARCH 2021**

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

**Members Present:**

Councillor James King (Chair)	
Councillor Bex White (Vice-Chair)	– Scrutiny Lead for Children's & 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	

**Others Present:**

Mr Zakir Hussain	– Resident
------------------	------------

**Officers Present:**

Claire Brown	– (Growth & Infrastructure Planner, Place)
Claudia Brown	– (Divisional Director of Adults Social Care)

**1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST AND OTHER INTERESTS**

Nil items

**2. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS**

Nil items

**3. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS 'CALLED IN'**

**3.1 Call-in - Outcome of consultation on revised approach to day support in adult social care**

The Committee was advised that the decision made by Cabinet on Wednesday, 3rd March

2021 in respect of agenda item 6.2 'Revised approach to day support in adult social care' had been 'called in' under the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution by Councillors Gabriela Salva-Macallan, Shah Ameen, Shad Chowdhury, Tarik Khan and Victoria Obaze ('Call-in Members').

Accordingly, the Committee considered the following:

- A. the Cabinet report.
- B. the Cabinet Decision published on 5 March 2021.
- C. the "call in" requisition from the Call-in Members (undated).
- D. representations by the Call-in Members.
- E. representations from a member of the community; and
- F. representations by the Cllr Rachel Blake, Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing.

### **3.2 Cabinet's decision**

The Committee noted the Cabinet's decision as published on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021:

- a) To agree the closure of Physical Disability Day Opportunities, Riverside day centre and Pritchard's Road day centre with effect from 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- b) To agree to develop Russia Lane as a 'dementia hub' day service
- c) To agree to open a community support hub from May 2021 onwards (if it is safe to do so in light of the Covid-19 pandemic)
- d) To endorse the proposal to encourage more people to organise their own day support through a direct payment
- e) To agree the commitment to make Tower Hamlets a more inclusive place for people with care and support needs

### **3.3 Call-In Members Presentation**

A. Call-in members presented the reasons for call-in and proposed alternative course of action, and added that:

- ❖ Keeping in-house provision very important
- ❖ Pandemic impacts leave an important ongoing need in recovery
- ❖ Care and support for individuals vitally important for future positioning for the council – even given the discretionary nature of day care/support
- ❖ Other councils (Haringey) are investing in these services, not reducing them
- ❖ Existing centres play an important community role with many services provided.

- B. Mr Zakir Hussain a member of the community, then addressed the Committee about his concerns about the Cabinet decision to the Committee, and added that:
- ❖ New hubs don't prioritise mental health, which is contrary to recognition of pandemic impacts
  - ❖ No clarity of specific services to be delivered from new hub, to replace existing arrangements at the Pritchard's Road or Riverside centres – where specialists are on-site
  - ❖ No alternative suggested for day opportunities
  - ❖ Consultation was not fit for purpose
- C. The Committee then posed a number of questions concerning:
- ❖ services affected by the closure of both Riverside and Pritchard's Road day centres
  - ❖ the kind of day support provided during the pandemic lockdown
  - ❖ how the consultation was received
  - ❖ concerns about the new Hub
  - ❖ slower, more phased implementation of changes
  - ❖ different funding options.

### **3.4 Lead Members Presentation**

The Lead Member reflected that it was clear from consultation that services are highly valued; and talked about:

- ❖ The design of the future service – continuing to meet collective needs, which is why there's a flexible and safe support hub at Sonali Gardens, which also arranges services at the spokes (other locations); therefore, replacement services are considered.
- ❖ The transition services set out – social worker assessments, specialists' transition arrangements for Pritchard's Road, commissioned mental health services
- ❖ Budget issues – will be spending £5 million more in ASC in response to need
- ❖ Alternative courses of action – cannot retain as it will not meet overall need; using £2.9 million won't work; co-production is a good option; transitioning into new hub could be an important part of pandemic recovery.
- ❖ The Committee asked further questions on matters including:
  - I. Staff impacts associated with closing centres
  - II. Accessing the new hub – different location in the borough
  - III. Consultation – open and closed questions
  - IV. Communications of the proposed changes for users/community

### **3.5 The Call-In Requisition**

The Committee after careful consideration **agreed** the following alternative course of action proposed in the call-in:

1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets
2. Funding for these day centres should be drawn down from the additional and unexpected £2.9 million Social Care Grant awarded to LBTH
3. The spaces provided by these centres should be used as part of a wider community offer, including after 4pm when Day Centre service users are not using them, in order to generate income and provide an additional community resource
4. That capital allocation be used to ensure that the centres be suitably adapted to meet the needs of specific types of service users and that all service users, carers, and providers will have confidence that they are suitable high-quality spaces to use to hire for community use
5. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard's Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
6. That the Pritchard's Road Day Centre continues as an "in-house" service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
7. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision
8. That the Council action the Government's guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre's  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>
9. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor's proposed changes collectively
10. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential

### 3.6 Consideration of the "Call-In"

After hearing from the Call-in Members and the Lead Member, the Committee stated that:

- as expressed previously it remained unconvinced about the Council cutting services at this time, during pandemic impacts and recovery, and putting money into reserves.
- the overall budget for day support is relatively small for the Borough's most vulnerable, and that the scale of the proposed changes is too large to cope with during pandemic.
- changes will mean different access/transport issues for people.
- it had concerns on the limits of the consultation.

### 3.7 Recommendation

As a result of a full and wide-ranging discussion the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** that the decision be referred to the Cabinet for reconsideration, including consideration of the alternative courses of action set out in the call-in requisition with the following additional and amended wording:

- A. point 1 – add ‘.and use from the wider community, and any new or existing grants available for allocation to adult social care.’
- B. remove points 2, 3 and 4
- C. add that OSC would like to see the previous reviews undertaken about Day Opportunities Centres, and information the council has about the impact of the proposed changes (new Hub) to existing activities/services at Sonali Gardens.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following alternative courses of action:

1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets and use from the wider community, and any new or existing grants available for allocation to adult social care
2. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard’s Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
3. That the Pritchard’s Road Day Centre continues as an “in-house” service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
4. The Committee would like to see the previous reviews undertaken about Day Opportunities Centres, and information the council has about the impact of the proposed changes (new Hub) to existing activities/services at Sonali Gardens
5. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision
6. That the Council action the Government’s guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre’s  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>
7. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor’s proposed changes collectively
8. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential.

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

Nil items

The meeting ended at 8.23 p.m.

Chair, Councillor James King  
Overview & Scrutiny Committee