

<b>Cabinet</b>  25 October 2023	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Jennifer Peters – Director Planning and Building Control/Interim Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Tower Hamlets New Local Plan: Regulation 18 Consultation Draft</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Wong (Plan Making Manager) & Marissa Ryan-Hernandez (Head of Service for Strategic Planning)
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	Significant impact on wards
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	08/09/2023
<b>Exempt information</b>	N/A
<b>Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome</b>	All priorities

### Executive Summary

The Local Plan is the Borough’s most important planning document. It sets out a vision, strategic priorities, planning policy framework, including site allocations, that guides all development in the Borough. Its purpose is to help inform decisions on planning applications and to meet the Council’s national and regional planning policy duties, as well as local objectives as set in the Strategic Plan.

The preparation of a new Local Plan has been identified as a priority for the Council, to help manage the future population growth and meet the needs of existing and future residents and communities, as well as to respond to major planning policy changes that have taken place at a national and regional level since the current Local Plan was adopted in 2020.

Cabinet will be asked to approve the Regulation 18 Local Plan – Consultation Draft for statutory consultation. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012, as amended. The draft Plan contains of a proposed vision and objectives for Tower Hamlets over the next 15 years to 2038, a spatial strategy, new planning policies and site allocations. These are being set out to promote sustainable development for a Borough that

continues to experience growth, and to plan for the opportunities and manage the challenges, that come with that growth.

The new Local Plan will assist in realising the economic, environmental, health and social objectives of the Council in building a vibrant and successful future for Tower Hamlets that benefits all residents, regardless of background or circumstances. The Local Plan will ensure that Tower Hamlets is taking a lead in ensuring that we build our Borough to benefit present and future generations.

### **Recommendations:**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the publication of the Regulation 18 – Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038: (Appendix 1) for formal consultation;
2. Approve the publication of the Regulation 18 – Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038: Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and other supplementary information, including draft evidence base studies (as Table 1) on the Council's website, at the Town Hall and other locations in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, alongside the Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038.
3. Provide approval to make any amendments to the documents in advance of public consultation commencing. Any such amendments to be made through the delegated authority of the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor.

## **1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked to agree with the officer's recommendations and approve the Draft new Local Plan document for formal consultation.

## **2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTION A: NO CHANGE TO EXISTING LOCAL PLAN**

- 2.1 The Council could decide not to prepare a new Local Plan at this time; however, this option is not advisable. Under regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) local planning authorities must review Local Plans at least once every 5 years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community. If a Local Authority does not have an up-to-date Plan, then it is likely that paragraph 11 of the NPPF will be triggered. This provides a “tilted balance” in favour of granting planning permission and could represent an opportunity for developers and landowners who are considering a speculative application.
- 2.2 Without a new Plan, the Council is not able to best respond to updates in planning legislation and national and regional guidance, specifically the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, the consultation draft National Planning Policy Framework and the 2021 London Plan. Specifically, it would not meet the requirements of Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s24 and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 s21) regarding conformity with the higher order policies and specifically the spatial development plan (London Plan).
- 2.3 The Plan would not adequately be able to respond to any shifting local needs of the existing, as well as new and growing population. These communities are involved in and inform the new Plan through consultation and engagement which is key and required as part of Local Plan preparation (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 s18, 21).
- 2.4 Furthermore, any new or local policy direction would not be able to be robustly justified in the absence of up-to-date evidence, as is required when developing a new Plan (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 s8(2)).
- 2.5 In delaying the process of updating the Local Plan documents, there is a high risk that the Borough may not be able to fully plan or invest effectively for the additional new homes, jobs and infrastructure, such as schools, parks, health facilities and transport needed to meet the extra demand from a growing and changing population. As a result, the Council may not be able to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits for our residents from development and to adequately support growth through infrastructure.
- 2.6 A fully up-to-date Local Plan will help in positively influencing the outcome of planning application decisions (delegated and at committee) and appeals, while also reducing the legal and financial risk of overturned appeals. These opportunities could be missed without the preparation of a new Local Plan in a timely manner.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTION B: PARTIAL REVIEW OF EXISTING LOCAL PLAN**

- 2.7 The Council could choose to respond by review of only those policies in the current Local Plan that relate directly to changes in legislation, to fulfil only legal and statutory requirements.
- 2.8 This option is not recommended for a number of reasons. Firstly, the vision contained in the adopted Local Plan (2020) no longer accurately reflects the future challenges, opportunities and aspirations of the Council and local community, as articulated in the Strategic Plan. As a result, it makes sense that a new vision for the Local Plan is prepared.
- 2.9 Secondly, the policies in the Local Plan should be read as a whole and should be considered together, as part of any review. It will be difficult to separate the policies out and argue that they are disconnected and have not, in some way, been affected by the numerous changes, including those to population and new government legislation and guidance.
- 2.10 Finally, the adopted Local Plan (2020) has been adopted at a time, where the social, economic, environmental, and political landscape was very different and much of the evidence base to support its policies is considered outdated. Global, national and local events have changed the Borough considerably since the last Local Plan was developed, and it is advisable to do a whole review, to ensure the Local Plan policies function as effectively as possible.

## **3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

### **The need for a new Local Plan**

- 3.1 The Council's current Local Plan "Managing growth and sharing the benefits", was adopted in 2020. It provides the planning policy framework for the Borough up to 2031. However, several objectives, policies and guidance contained in, and informing the Plan, are considered outdated, particularly due to changes in national and regional guidance, in particular the new Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill and the draft consultation National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.2 Furthermore, there have been numerous global and local, social, environmental, political and economic shifts, for example, the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the impacts of Brexit and the cost-of-living crisis and the ambitions of the new administration.
- 3.3 There has also been new information gathered and released since the adopted Plan, most notably, the Census, which has shown that from 2011 to 2021, the population of Tower Hamlets increased by 22.1% from 254,100 to 310,300. This marks a significant proportional increase and represents the fastest population growth of any local authority in England. This population increase

together with the overall size of the Borough has Tower Hamlets being recorded as the most densely populated local authority area in England with 15,695 residents per km<sup>2</sup> - compared to the national average of 424 per km<sup>2</sup>.

- 3.4 The planning powers for the parts of the Borough currently in London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) boundary, will be passed back to LBTH by the end of 2024. The LLDC, the local planning authority responsible for coordinating the growth and regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounding areas as part of the 2012 London Olympic Games legacy. These areas are Fish Island, Hackney Wick and Bromley-by-Bow.
- 3.5 Cumulatively, these trends, challenges and opportunities will have a significant impact on the Borough's housing, employment, town centres, infrastructure and environment for the next 15 years. As a result the Council has committed to the preparation of a new Local Plan as a priority, to respond to these changes.

### **Draft Local Plan – Preparation**

- 3.6 The preparation of a new Local Plan must follow nationally set legal and procedural requirements that dictate: the stages of the plan preparation; who should be consulted and when; and what information is required to support the Local Plan. In particular, the new Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and must seek to meet the requirements of the London Plan.
- 3.7 The regulations also include the criteria against which the new Local Plan will be independently tested to ensure it is fit for purpose and 'sound' in planning terms. To be sound the new Local Plan must be:
- Positively prepared: for example that it positively seeks to meet the requirements of the London Plan;
  - Justified: that the policies in the Local Plan are supported by evidence and are reasonably justified;
  - Effective: that the policies in the plan can be delivered and have been formulated on the basis of effective joint working with partners; and
  - Consistent with national policy: that it has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 3.8 The Council considers that the Draft Local Plan has been 'soundly' prepared in accordance with the appropriate legal and procedural requirements, including the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) and the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.
- 3.6 The development of the Draft new Local Plan builds on a significant body of existing work, in particular the content of the Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan (Our Borough, our Plan) 2018-2023 which identifies the main pressures and priorities for the Borough and the policies in the existing Local Plan (2031: Managing Growth and Sharing the Benefits) adopted in 2020.

- 3.7 The Draft new Local Plan has been informed by early engagement that was held from January 2023 to March 2023. The Council's 6-week early engagement stage for the new Local Plan included a range of digital, interactive and accessible events to ensure maximum outreach across the community. Events were held both online and in-person and included promotion through social media, emails, website, newsletters, press notices and posters/leaflets. During this early engagement phase, the Council received over 6000 online visits across the 'Let's Talk' website and the interactive 'Story Maps' platform. The Local Plan engagement document was downloaded 500 times and cumulatively, there were 392 submissions to the project and approximately 115 attendees across the events.
- 3.8 To ensure a representative cross-section of the community was engaged, officers worked collaboratively with the council's communications team to plan specific activities and outreach. This included handing out flyers at Whitechapel Station, Idea stores, the Town Hall and at the East London Mosque. Officers also ensured continuous engagement with the Mayor's office and communications lead to ensure appropriate contact with members and hard-to-reach networks.
- 3.9 In addition, on-going discussions took place with both internal and external colleagues through individual meetings, and regular Internal/External Stakeholder Group meetings, including:
- **Mayor's office** – at the regular Planning meeting with the Mayor, where key updates, such as 'early engagement' and outputs have been presented, including the 'vision' for the Local Plan. The Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, have provided a steer on aspirations and policy direction to ensure alignment with the new Strategic Plan.
  - **Internally** – input of colleagues across the Council at the regular Local Plan Steering Group Meeting and regular Working Group Meetings held across each of the Plan's 10 policy theme areas. These discussions were followed by presentations to the DLT, CLT over recent months, followed by separate engagement with specific officers.
  - **Externally** – Greater London Authority, Transport for London, Historic England, London Boroughs of Newham, Greenwich, Hackney, City of London Corporation, London Legacy Development Corporation, neighbourhood forums, key landowners, Canal and River Trust, Network Rail, Environment Agency and Historic England.
- 3.10 The policies contained in the Draft Local Plan have been informed by findings from an updated and relevant evidence base to ensure that they are sound and justified, and able to be robustly defended at Examination in Public (EiP). The list of evidence is included below in Table 1. This will be published for public information, alongside the Draft Local Plan. The list below is not exhaustive and only includes newly commissioned Local Plan specific reports. The content of the Draft Local Plan is also informed by existing and emerging strategies and evidence produced by the Council and its partners.

**Table 1: A list of Evidence supporting the Draft Local Plan**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Details</b>
Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)	Meets the requirements of the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Assessment, and also appraises health and equalities.
Employment Land Review (ELR)	Assesses supply and demand of employment land or floor space to inform Local Plan policies.
Town Centre Retail Capacity Study	Considers the health and capacity of the borough's town centres.
Local Housing Needs Assessment	Adds detail to the London Plan LHNA and identifies specific local housing need, in relation to market and affordable housing types, tenures and house size and the accommodation needs of specialist housing such as student housing
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Assesses the flood risk of our allocated sites, likely significant effects to certain sites in the Borough and what mitigation may be required in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
Viability Assessment	Assesses the combined impact of Local Plan policies on development viability, to ensure the policies do not prevent development coming forward.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Identifies the infrastructure required to support growth, potential funding sources and timeframes for delivery.
Conservation Strategy	Provides a positive strategy for the management of the historic environment in line with the requirements of the NPPF.
Characterisation and Growth Strategy	Assesses the character of different areas of the borough, identify their suitability for growth, identify suitable locations for tall buildings, and set out area-wide visions in line with the requirements of London Plan Policy D1.
Views and Landmarks Study	Considers borough landmarks and views important to the community and in need of protection.
Inclusive Design Study	Provides analysis and context to ensuring the design of the borough's places and streets are inclusive.
Arts and Culture, Pubs in Tower Hamlets Study	Considers the arts and cultural make-up setting the basis for their promotion and protection as well as the existing pubs across the borough.
Site Capacity Assessment	Provide estimated housing capacities on potential site allocations within the new Local Plan.

### **Draft Local Plan – Content**

- 3.11 The draft new Local Plan will cover a period from 2023 to 2038, for 15 years. The content of the new Local Plan reflects and responds to updates in national and regional planning policy; as well as any economic, social, environmental, and political changes; and also, any local direction and corporate priorities, as

set out in the Council's new Strategic Plan. The new Local Plan will be supported by new, updated and robust evidence including assessment of the communities' needs, as well as wide-reaching and effective consultation and engagement.

3.12 The Draft Local Plan vision and policies is focused on collectively aiming to achieving the following Strategic Objectives through new development in the Borough to 2031:

1. A clean and green future
2. Mixed and inclusive communities to secure homes for everyone
3. A thriving local and global economy that boosts jobs,
4. Businesses and tackles inequalities
5. Supporting young people and accelerating education
6. Healthy, safe and inclusive neighbourhoods
7. Securing infrastructure delivery
8. Local identity, places and a representative borough

3.13 The structure and content of the Draft Local Plan is as follows:

- 1) Mayor's foreword
- 2) Setting the scene
- 3) Vision and objectives
- 4) Policy areas:
  1. Delivering the Local Plan vision
  2. Clean and green future
  3. Homes for our community
  4. People, places and spaces
  5. Employment and economic growth
  6. Town centres
  7. Community infrastructure
  8. Biodiversity and open space
  9. Reuse, recycling and waste
  10. Movement and connectivity
- 5) Site allocations
- 6) Implementation and Monitoring
- 7) Standards and Appendices

3.14 Chapters 2 and 3 provide details on consultation, followed by an introduction, context and vision and objectives. The introductory chapters note the importance of the Borough's existing 24 places to the character and identity of Tower Hamlets and strategically considers how future growth will take place at a sub area level, in four identified areas: City Fringe, Central, Lower Lea Valley and Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Sub-Areas. This is expanded on in greater detail in Chapter 5 with the site allocations.

3.15 Chapter 4 of the Draft Local Plan contains the strategic and development management policies, including the delivery of new affordable housing, as well as additional jobs and workspaces, improvements to public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure to meet the needs of both existing and new communities. It also includes design, heritage and environmental sustainability

which are essential to the creation of sustainable and liveable places, of which all our residents will be proud.

- 3.16 Chapter 3 links to the spatial approach introduced in the beginning of the document and elaborates on the approach by providing further details for each of the sub-areas and includes relevant site allocations.

### **Draft Local Plan – Formal Consultation**

- 3.17 The regulation requires a six-week consultation period.
- 3.18 During this consultation period, a series of consultation events, including in person events, will be held for public participation in the new Local Plan preparation process. See Table 2.
- 3.19 Planning officers will work with the Mayor's office and the Communications team to ensure wide reach of the consultation. Key to informing and planning these events is to ensure inclusivity, to be able to capture the comments and ideas of all communities in the Borough.
- 3.20 The following events will take place to support the consultation:

#### 'In person' stakeholder workshop/drop-in sessions:

- *The project team will host 'in-person' consultation sessions. This will ensure that those with limited access to online resources are able to provide feedback in person.*
- *In-person drop-ins will also be organised and hosted at council buildings or strategic locations such as the Tower Hamlets Town Hall, Idea stores and community centres, to engage stakeholders who are unable to attend the in-person consultation sessions, but would rather provide in-person feedback than online.*
- *Where community group leaders have been consulted and in-person events have been decided as the most effective methods of consultation, these will be arranged in collaboration with the relevant groups.*
- *Pop-up locations may be identified such as parks and community facilities. In-person consultation and post-it note feedback can be provided by passers-by who may not typically engage with council projects.*
- *The in-person consultation sessions will be advertised throughout the consultation period in the lead up to the date of the events with targeted emails, newsletter adverts, social media posts and posters, to ensure sufficient notice and reminders are provided to offer all residents and stakeholders the opportunity to engage.*
- *The Mayor and Tower Hamlet's Councillors will be encouraged to advertise and promote the Reg. 18 Local Plan consultation at their drop-ins and surgeries, inviting the residents from their wards to make*

*representations via the various consultation methods outlined in this strategy.*

- **When:** TBC

Online workshops:

- *The project team will host online consultation sessions via Microsoft Teams. This will ensure that those who are unable to attend any of the in-person sessions are given opportunities to provide feedback through online sessions.*
- *The online sessions will be advertised in the lead up to the date of the events with targeted emails, social media posts and posters, to ensure sufficient notice and reminders are provided to offer all residents and stakeholders the opportunity to engage.*
- **When:** TBC

Virtual drop-in sessions:

- *Virtual 'drop-in' sessions will be hosted via Microsoft Teams as well as the more structural workshop sessions, where LBTH officers will be available to answer any questions or queries and gather feedback.*
- *Details of the drop-in sessions will be circulated via the Local Plan mailing list as well as on the project Let's Talk Page and targeted social media posts.*
- *Online drop-in sessions aim to make engaging with the project as convenient as possible for those who may not be able to make any in-person events.*
- **When:** TBC

3.21 The Draft Local Plan (Appendix 1), the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) (Appendix 2) and other supporting documents will be published on the Council's website. The public and stakeholders will be able to make comments online, via an online consultation portal, email or by post. The website will contain details of the consultation activities, as far in advance as possible. **Please note:** the Reg 18 Draft Local Plan (Appendix 1) and Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) are currently in draft, as minor changes to the draft Local Plan are ongoing. The full IIA will be provided for MAB prior to the Cabinet meeting with a final consolidated version then being provided for public consultation.

### **Draft Local Plan – Programme and next steps**

3.22 A summary of the indicative Local Plan preparation timetable is set out in Table 3:

**Table 3: Local Plan key stages**

<b>Local Plan Key Stages</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Consult on the Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18)	November – December 2023
Publish the Proposed Submission Local Plan (regulation 19)	Summer 2024
Submission to the Planning Inspectorate	Winter 2024/25
Examination in Public*	Spring/Summer 2025
Adopt the new Local Plan	Winter 2025

\*Subject to Planning Inspectorate

- 3.23 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) have consulted on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework. These reforms propose the introduction of national development management policies, changes to the way policies are prepared and amending the requirements placed on Local Planning Authorities as part of the plan-making process. To ensure plans can still progress in the short term whilst the proposed reforms are subject to debate and implementation, DLUHC have set-out transitional arrangements that allow LPAs to submit their Local Plans by 30 June 2025 for independent examination under the existing legal framework. As per the above key stage programme, it is planned to submit the new Tower Hamlets Local Plan for examination in Winter 2024/25 to make use of the transitional arrangements.

## **4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Relevant equality impact assessments will be carried as required as part of the new Local Plan preparation process. Such assessments are requirements set-out in the Town and Country Planning Regulations. The Regulation 18 Draft Integrated Impact Assessment can be reviewed at Appendix 2 (currently a scoping report. The full IIA will be provided for MAB prior to the Cabinet meeting with a final consolidated version then being provided for public consultation.

## **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 No other statutory implications.

## **6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.1 There are no financial implications emanating from this report. The cost of preparing the new local plan has been met from growth approved as part of the budget setting process in 2022/23.

## **7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (“the NPPF”) was first published on 27 March 2012 and has been regularly updated since then. The most recent revision was on 20 July 2021. This sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

7.2 The NPPF advises at paragraph 15 that “(T)he planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.”

7.3 The NPPF further advises that local plan policies should be reviewed “at least once every 5 years and should then be updated as necessary”. The Council’s current Local Plan (“Managing Growth and Sharing the Benefits” was adopted in 2020 and it is therefore appropriate to review it and update it as necessary. The report highlights the options available to the Council (full review/partial review/do nothing), and no comment is made on these as the pros and cons of each are spelt out sufficiently to enable a decision to be made.

7.4 This Report seeks –

- 1) Approval of the Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038 for formal consultation – formal consultation is a statutory step required by Regulation 18 of Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (“the 2012 Regs”) which reads:

“Preparation of a local plan

18.—(1) A local planning authority must—

(a) notify each of the bodies or persons specified in paragraph (2) of the subject of a local plan which the local planning authority propose to prepare, and

(b) invite each of them to make representations to the local planning authority about what a local plan with that subject ought to contain.

(2) The bodies or persons referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(a) such of the specific consultation bodies as the local planning authority consider may have an interest in the subject of the proposed local plan;

(b) such of the general consultation bodies as the local planning authority consider appropriate; and

(c) such residents or other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area from which the local planning authority consider it appropriate to invite representations.

(3) In preparing the local plan, the local planning authority must take into account any representation made to them in response to invitations under paragraph (1)."

Whilst Reg 18 of the 2012 Regs details who should be consulted, the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (April 2019) recognises the importance of consultation. Paragraphs 3.11 + 3.12 read:

"3.11 - In line with national requirements, when preparing a new Local Plan we will make

consultation materials available at the Town Hall, on our website, and in local libraries. We will advertise the consultations through the local newspaper, and on

our website and social media channels. In addition, we will also contact all those

who are on our planning policy database with updates about consultations....

3.12. Where appropriate, we will consult using additional tools and methods such as working with established community groups and partnerships, and arranging public exhibitions and interactive workshop sessions. These methods will be more appropriate at the earlier stages of plan-making."

- 2) Approval of the publication of the final Regulation 18 Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038: Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and other supplementary information, including draft evidence base studies (as Table 1) on the Council's website alongside the Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038 – any document that is to be made available to the wider public should be published on the Council's website. Regulation 35 of the 2012 Regs states:

"Availability of documents: general

35.—(1) A document is to be taken to be made available by a local planning authority when—

(a) made available for inspection, at their principal office and at such other places within their area as the local planning authority consider appropriate, during normal office hours, and

(b) published on the local planning authority's website."

Picking up on the availability of material, the Council's Statement of Community Involvement is clear that publication on the Council's website will not be the sole avenue of publication and the suggested recommendation, when coupled with commitments within the Statement of Community Involvement, will ensure that publication meets the required standards.

Making this documentation available will ensure informed and meaningful engagement, ensuring that contributions and representations can be specifically focussed, enabling the Council to respond accordingly. It bears all the hallmarks of open, transparent consultation.

- 3) Provide approval to make any amendments to the documents in advance of public consultation commencing. Any such amendments to be made through the delegated authority of the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor.

7.5 At this stage, the Tower Hamlets Draft Local Plan 2038 is very much in its formulative stages. Cabinet is being asked for authority to start the process of formal consultation for a period of 8 weeks. Legislation requires a minimum of 6 weeks, but 8 weeks is appropriate, taking into account vacation periods, and to ensure that consultation is as extensive as possible.

7.6 It is inevitable that amendments will be required and appropriate that these are delegated to officers to deal with. Broadly speaking, the Council's Constitution delegates the day-to-day work on matters such as this to officers, reserving Cabinet/Council involvement for specific steps. It is appropriate that such a delegation be exercised by the Director of Housing and Regeneration. It is noted that any such exercise of the delegation will be in consultation with the Mayor.

7.7 The Reg 18 consultation is but an early stage in the preparation of a local plan. The consultation will enable representations to be made on the draft local plan and for each of these representations to be considered before the Council can look at moving onto the next stage of the process which will involve further involvement and approval by Cabinet/Council prior to submitting the draft local plan to the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities for examination in public.

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## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1. Tower Hamlets Regulation 18 Draft New Local Plan
- Appendix 2. Tower Hamlets Regulation 18 Draft Integrated Impact Assessment - Scoping Report
- Appendix 3. Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Strategy

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- None.

**Officer contact details for documents:**

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