

# Working for Tower Hamlets



**2005-2006**  
*Promoting Racial Equality  
Getting Closer to Communities*  
**2004-2005**  
*Supporting Social Care Workers*  
**2003-2004**  
*Community Cohesion*



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



# Our vision

Our vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. This is a vision that is shared by all partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership, made up of residents, the council and other public service providers, businesses, faith communities and the voluntary and community sector. There are five major themes in our Community Plan to make Tower Hamlets:

**A better place for living safely** – reducing crime, making people feel safe and creating a more secure and cleaner environment.

**A better place for living well** – improving housing, health and social care and promoting healthy living.

**A better place for creating and sharing prosperity** – bringing more investment into the borough and ensuring that all our residents and businesses are in a position to benefit from, and contribute to, growing economic prosperity.

**A better place for learning, achievement and leisure** – raising aspirations, expectations and achievement, and providing the widest range of arts and leisure opportunities for all and celebrating the rich diversity of our communities.

**A better place for excellent public services** – improving public services for local people to make sure they represent good value for money and are provided in ways that meet local needs. Within

each of these areas, challenging but realistic targets for change have been set, which focus on the critical things that will make a difference to people's life chances.

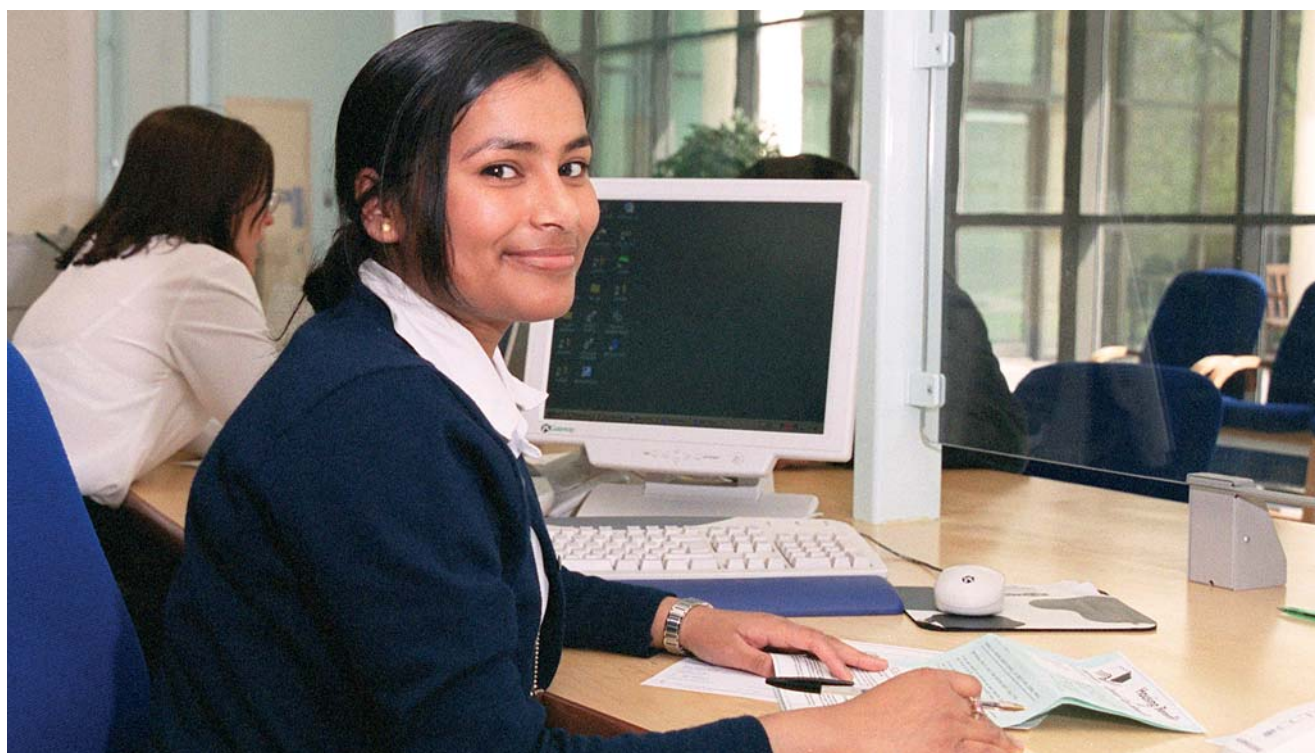
The Strategic Plan describes the council's overall aims and objectives for 2002-2006, how well it is performing, the improved outcomes intended for people who live and work in the borough, and the actions to be taken to deliver that improvement. Each year, services across the council help to draw up – in consultation with stakeholders – a new action plan with activities that they will carry out in the forthcoming year to improve the council's performance and deliver the goals of the Strategic Plan.

## Staff Survey 2004

80% of respondents stated that Tower Hamlets Council is a good place to work.

83% of respondents stated that they were aware of the training opportunities available to them with 74% stating that overall, training had helped them to do their job more effectively.

72% of respondents stated that the Council had improved the way it provides equality of opportunity to all ethnic groups with 71% stating that there have been improvements in providing equality of opportunity to people of different religions and beliefs.





*Martin Smith*

#### LETTER FROM ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARTIN SMITH

Thank you for your interest in joining Tower Hamlets Council – you could not have chosen a more interesting and exciting time to consider joining us.

You'll find working for the council will be one of the most rewarding and challenging moves you could make. You will be making a difference to the lives of thousands of people every day and will be able to directly relate what you do to the improvements taking place.

We are ambitious for the future and are looking for equally ambitious people to join us and continue the transformation of our services.

Tower Hamlets is a unique and special borough where some of the most spectacular redevelopment in the city sits alongside some of the most deprived areas in the country. It is a borough of real contrasts with a talented, thriving and cosmopolitan population and a successful and growing business base – from Brick Lane to Petticoat Lane, the City Fringe to Canary Wharf and the Docklands. We are pleased to be home to many diverse communities, including a large Bengali community and sizable Somali, Chinese and Vietnamese communities.

We are proud to have one of the lowest council tax rates in London and to have been rated as a 'good' council that is improving well. We are determined to become an excellent council because the people of Tower Hamlets deserve no less.

We are delighted that the vast majority of our staff enjoy working for us – and are pleased to have achieved Investors in People accreditation council-wide. Our social services and children's services have been independently rated as amongst the very best in the country, despite the borough's many challenges. Local children do better in our schools every year – and schools remain among the fastest improving nationally.

According to independent research, most people like living in the borough and get on well with their neighbours. We are extremely pleased to have achieved Beacon status for community cohesion and race equality and are committed to employing a workforce to reflect the community we serve. We are also proud to have achieved beacon status for supporting young people, getting closer to communities and supporting social care workers.

We are an innovative council too as shown by our ground breaking Idea Store initiatives which are cutting edge learning and library facilities in high streets attracting thousands of visitors and bucking all the national trends for declining library use.

Of course there are other areas where we know we can and must do better. We are completely committed to continual improvements and are honest about where things need to be strengthened and improved. We are listening to local residents and designing services which better reflect their diverse needs. We will ensure that in doing so we deliver even better value for money, including by working in ever stronger partnerships.

We remain ambitious and hungry for improvement and are looking for employees who want to make positive contribution.

I wish you every success with your application.

Martin Smith  
Chief Executive

## Employee profiles



### **Sukriti Sen**

Team Manager

The council has a real commitment towards furthering your learning and development. I am now being given additional backing to gain an MA in Health and Social Care Management. Overall, I have to say that Tower Hamlets is a great place in which to work. With my qualifications and experience I could have worked almost anywhere, but I stayed here - that says something.



### **Marwar Uddin**

Technical Administration Officer

"As a resident and employee I can see real changes for the better"



### **Anastasia Edwards**

Housing Support Officer

"I live locally and I want to contribute to the development of the community in which I live"



### **Dawood Haddadi**

Specialist Environmental Health Officer

"Tower Hamlets values its staff and is an excellent employer committed to staff development"



### **Wunmi Odusina**

Manager - Home Ownership Services

"Working for the Borough has been very interesting and in many ways, fulfilling, and should enable me to meet my career aspirations in Local Government"



### **Chris Hopkins**

HR Assistant

"A diverse and friendly workplace wanting to make a real difference. It is inspiring".

## Improving Equality of Opportunity

We're absolutely committed to the highest standards in equalities as an employer and a service provider. We're making sure our workforce is more representative of the community by implementing a range of initiatives. These include improving access to council buildings and the introduction of staff forums for black and minority ethnic employees, employees with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees.

The staff forums give employees a means of raising specific issues related to their employment and the Council a means of consulting on the equalities aspects of employment policies and practices. This will help ensure that the Council has the mechanisms in place to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.



# Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions for employees are agreed nationally through collective bargaining undertaken by recognised trade unions. In addition to the nationally agreed terms and conditions, local agreements have been implemented to enhance conditions.

## Family Friendly Policies

We have a number of schemes that help employees juggle their personal life with their job. They include:

- Job sharing
- Flexible working
- Maternity and paternity leave
- Adoption and fostering
- Special leave arrangements for carers
- Special leave for religious holidays

## Probation

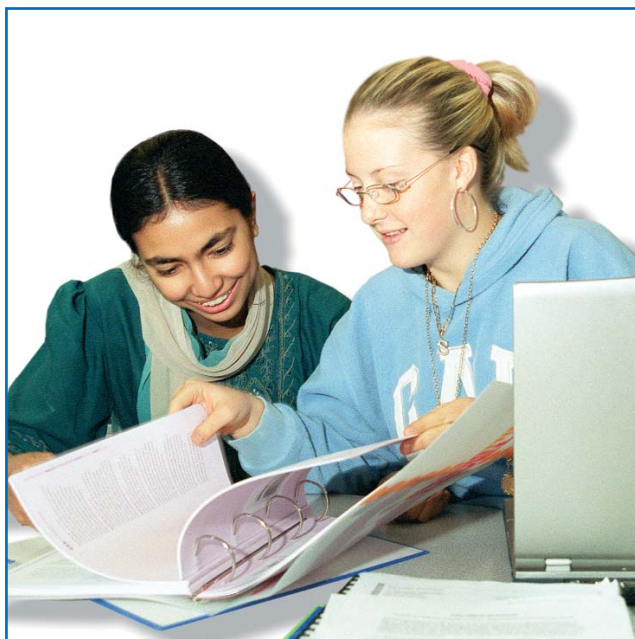
You will be required to complete a six month probation period which can be extended by a further 10 weeks. Upon satisfactory completion, your employment will be confirmed.

## Hours you are required to work

You are required to work 35 hours per week unless your contract specifies otherwise.

## Salary

Please see individual advert for salary scale. You will be paid at the end of the month and we increase salaries every year.



## Final Salary Pension Scheme

All employees may join the Local Government Pension Scheme which is regarded as one of the most generous currently available. New employees contribute at the rate of 6% of gross salary and full tax relief is automatically given. The scheme provides excellent benefits in the form of an index linked retirement pension and tax-free lump sum based on final year's salary, together with ill-health, redundancy and death benefits. Pension benefits can be transferred to or from our scheme provided Inland Revenue requirements are met. The Scheme is contracted out of the Government State Earnings Related Scheme (SERPS).

## Continuous Service

If you join us from another public sector employer we will recognise your continuous service for leave and sick pay purposes.

## Medical screening

All offers of employment are subject to medical clearance and you will be required to complete a medical questionnaire and in some instances a full medical. All information received is treated confidentially.

## National Insurance

You need to produce original proof of a valid National Insurance number. Failure to provide this could result in the offer of employment not being confirmed.

## Annual season ticket loans

These are available to employees who wish to purchase annual season tickets for travelling to work.



### **Cars users – essential/casual**

If you are appointed to a job with an essential or casual allowance you will be given details of the scheme upon appointment.

### **Car parking**

Car parking space is limited and employees are encouraged to use the various transport services available.

### **Smoking**

The Council operates a no smoking policy.

### **Declaration of other employment**

Employees Scale 6 and above are expected to devote their whole time service to the work of the council.

### **Code of Conduct**

All employees are subject to the Council's Code of Conduct which provides guidance on general standards of behaviour and conduct.

### **Annual leave**

Annual leave entitlement is between 21 to 31 days depending on length of service and type of job. Individual entitlements are included in the contract of employment. In addition to normal bank holidays the council allows three additional days at Christmas and one additional days leave at the spring bank holiday (this concessionary day can be used as a flexible day at other times of the year).

### **Occupational sick pay**

The Council promotes an attendance culture, however if you are absent because of genuine illness you will be eligible for sick pay.

## **Occupational health**

An in-house occupational health service is available to all staff for health advice and access to counselling services.

Full details of the Conditions of Service will be outlined in your Contract of Employment and the staff handbook if you are offered employment with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

## **Learning and development**

We are committed to 'lifelong learning' and to developing the potential of all our employees. You will receive a Performance, Development and Review (appraisal) once a year with a review every six months. All employees are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, to share their learning, and help to create opportunities for others to learn.

## **Applying for a vacant post**

We will compare your application form against the criteria outlined in the person specification. The person specification describes the abilities, skills, knowledge and experience you will need to do the job. Please study it carefully and write out your application so that it covers all the requirements listed in the person specification. You may want to use subheadings as part of your supporting statement. When we choose people to interview using the short-listing process, we always look to see how well candidates meet the requirements of the person specification.



# How to fill in the application form

## Checklist

- ✓ Complete all sections of the form
- ✓ Complete a draft of the form to avoid any mistakes
- ✓ Personal Details: Please tick the appropriate box if applying for a job-share. You can apply with or without a job share partner.
- ✓ Employment History: You must give your full employment history; paid or unpaid and explain any gaps in employment.
- ✓ Education Qualifications & Training: Please list these and record any membership of professional bodies. Please note, if you are appointed we will need to see your original qualification certificates.
- ✓ Personal statement: Choose those areas of your abilities, skills and experience that are relevant to the job you are applying for. Remind yourself of qualities and skills you may take for granted. Remember, as well as telling us about paid work you have done, you should also consider other experience you may have. This might include experience gained at home, in the community or through voluntary, leisure or college activities. You should provide evidence, using examples to demonstrate. For example "I managed conflicting deadlines" – then explain how you achieved this. If you are starting work for the first time, we know you may not be able to fill in much detail in this part of the application form so give us as much information as you can in the other sections.



If you consider yourself to be disabled, you are encouraged to declare your disability when applying for a job. We are positive about employing disabled people. As a holder of the Two Ticks Disability symbol, we guarantee you an interview if you meet the requirements of the job.

## References

It is our policy to approach current employers, whether or not you name them as a referee. We also approach additional previous employers where necessary. If it is your wish that we do not contact your referees before interview, please indicate this on the form.

## Prevention of illegal working

Under Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, it is a criminal offence for an employer to employ a person who is subject to immigration control (i.e. a person who requires leave to enter / remain in the UK) unless he or she is entitled to be employed in the UK. We are obliged to ask all successful applicants to provide evidence that they are entitled to work in the UK. Before we can confirm the offer of employment, you must provide relevant proof of eligibility to work in the UK.

## Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 was passed by the Government, to ensure that anyone convicted of a criminal offence were not permanently disadvantaged in the job market. In essence, people are to be given another chance. You do not have to advise us of 'spent' convictions (except see \* below) but if you have a criminal conviction that is not 'spent' (see [www.lawon-theweb.co.uk](http://www.lawon-theweb.co.uk)) you must advise us of this.

Some jobs\*, mostly those involving working with children and vulnerable adults, are exempted from the Act and so any criminal conviction is never considered to be 'spent' and you must advise us of any conviction you have had in the past. If you tell us that you have a criminal conviction and we offer you an interview, you must take with you to the interview details of the conviction(s) or offence(s) in a sealed envelope marked 'private and confidential' with your name and the title of the job for which you are applying. The envelope will only be opened and considered if we agree to appoint you for the post. If you are not selected, the envelope will be securely destroyed. Failure to disclose any conviction(s) for an exempt post, whether spent or not, may lead to the withdrawal of the offer of employment. The job description will state whether the post you are applying for is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

## Criminal Records Bureau (CRB Checks)

We use the CRB Service to assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and fully comply with the CRB's Code of Practice. We undertake to treat all applicants fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against anyone who is the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of convictions or other information revealed. A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your appointment. The job description will state whether a CRB check is required.

**If you require any further information please contact the Recruitment Team on 020 7364 4338/4571/4490/4595**

