Meeting of the

TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28 November 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

AGENDA

VENUE
Council Chamber, 1st Floor,
Town Hall, Mulberry Place,
5 Clove Crescent,
London E14 2BG

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact:

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TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the London Borough of the Tower Hamlets to be held in THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG at 7.30 p.m. on WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2007

Martin Smith
Chief Executive
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2007
7.30 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992.

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Note from the Chief Executive
This note is guidance only. Members should consult the Council’s Code of Conduct for further details. Note: Only Members can decide if they have an interest therefore they must make their own decision. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice prior to attending at a meeting.

Declaration of interests for Members

Where a Member has a personal interest in any business of the authority as described in paragraph 4 of the Council’s Code of Conduct then s/he must disclose this personal interest in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Code. Members should disclose the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting and certainly no later than the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

(a) An interest that you must register

(b) An interest that is not on the register, but where the well-being or financial position of you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association, is likely to be affected by the business of your authority more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision.

Where a personal interest is declared a Member may still stay and take part in the debate and decision on that item. In other words, if you declare a personal interest you can remain in the meeting, speak and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.

What constitutes a prejudicial interest?

Your personal interest will also be a prejudicial interest in a matter if (a), (b) and either (c) or (d) below apply:

(a) A member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think that your personal interests are so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interests; and

(b) The matter does not fall within one of the exempt categories of decision listed in paragraph 6.2 of the Code; and either

(c) The matter affects your financial position or that of a body with which you are associated; or
The matter relates to the determination of a licensing or regulatory application. Please refer to paragraph 6 of the adopted code of conduct.

**Effect of prejudicial interests on participation at meetings**

The key points to remember if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting:

(a) You must declare that you have a prejudicial interest, and the nature of that interest, as soon as that interest becomes apparent to you; and

(b) You should leave the room for the duration of consideration and decision on the item, unless (d) below applies; and

(c) You must not seek to improperly influence a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest. This rule is similar to your general obligation not to use your position as a Member improperly to your or someone else’s advantage or disadvantage.

(d) If Members of the public are allowed to make representations at the meeting, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, by statutory right or otherwise (e.g. if the meeting allows deputations), you can also attend the meeting for that purpose only. However, you must immediately leave the room once you have finished answering questions or when the meeting decides that you have finished (if that is earlier). You cannot remain in the meeting or in the public gallery during the debate or decision on the matter.

(e) If an ordinary member of the public is not allowed to speak on the matter, you cannot do so if you have a prejudicial interest. You must leave the room where the debate is being held and not seek to influence the debate in any way.

When declaring an interest, Members are requested to specify the nature of the interest, the particular agenda item to which the interest relates and to also specify whether the interest is of a personal or personal and prejudicial nature. This procedure is designed to assist the public’s understanding of the meeting and is also designed to enable a full entry to be made in the Statutory Register of Interests which is kept by the Service Head, Democratic Services on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

3. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 11th September 2007.

4. **TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
5. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS OR DEPUTATIONS

5.1 Deputations

No requests for deputations to the meeting had been received at the time of the agenda despatch.

Details of any deputation requests received before the deadline for such requests will be circulated to Members before the meeting.

5.2 Petitions

The Council’s Constitution provides that a maximum of three petitions are presented at any meeting and these are selected in the order that they are received. At the time of agenda despatch the following request to submit a petition had been received. Details of any further petition requests received before the deadline will be circulated to Members before the meeting:

(i) Petition against Crossrail, submitted by Mr Muhammad Haque, Organiser, Khoodeelaar! and others:

We the undersigned residents, business personnel and members of the community in the Brick Lane, Whitechapel, Stepney London E1 area and in other parts of the East London Borough of Tower Hamlets, are aware of the ‘Crossrail’ ‘project’ being ‘carried over’ to be processed in the Houses of Parliament during the forthcoming session of the UK Parliament and that in this context we do support this formal petition organised by the Khoodeelaar! Campaign against the Crossrail hole Bill (the ‘Crossrail Bill’, now in the UK House/s of Parliament, as at 8 November 2007) in the context of the constitutional remit and role and powers available to and exercisable by the said Tower Hamlets Council as and when duly constituted and that we in particular support the demand as put forward on behalf of the local community by the Khoodeelaar! Campaign that the said Tower Hamlets Council publish the full facts including the contents, references, and implications of all their (the Tower Hamlets Council’s) contacts with the de facto and the de jure promoters of the scheme known as the ‘Crossrail’ scheme and with any of their agents, representatives, employees or intermediaries including with any ‘special interpreters’ for the time being (at any point concerned within the frame of time that has been described in this petition) and held at any time and in any place and for any duration in the past seven years and that we also support the Khoodeelaar! Campaign demand that the Tower Hamlets Council make available to the local community in this borough and without any further delay the full evidence and the full contents of all the independently verifiable comments, opinions, proposals, suggestions as applying to the transport needs of London, and those as applying to the transport needs of the area corresponding to the London borough of Tower Hamlets and that they (the Tower Hamlets Council) do make the information...
available in the most accessible (as defined reasonably and in ordinary language) mode, form and location and media and as specified and covered by the foregoing description and we support the demand that the Mayor of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council show in a reasonable way and in a way that reaches the widest numbers of the community across the Borough generally and in those parts of the Borough in whose defence and about whose particular rights, needs and concerns the Khoodeelah! Campaign has been actively making representations and communications to the relevant councillors and the relevant holders of offices in the Borough of Tower Hamlets Council what evidential correlatives can be cited or applied to justify the particular promotional claims that have been issued in favour of the Crossrail hole plan in the name of the Tower Hamlets Council over the past seven years and relating in specific terms to the state of abilities by skills, by disposition, by the operation of the social, historic, demographic and academic and other relevant and empirically vindicated and applicable factors and that we finally support the demand for the making of the information and evidence available not later than the 22 December 2007.

6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions from members of the public have been received for inclusion on the agenda for the meeting.

7. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL 15 - 20

(Maximum of 30 minutes allowed)

The questions which have been received are set out in agenda item 7.

8. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL’S COMMITTEES

8.1 Report of the Cabinet of 7th November 2007 21 - 116
- Licensing Act 2003 – Three year review of Licensing Policy

- Review of Polling Places and Districts
9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

9.1 Joint Arrangements

No business under this heading to be considered.

9.2 External Organisations

No business under this heading to be considered.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Appointment of Cabinet Member

To appoint a Councillor to serve as a member of the Authority’s Cabinet (Lead Member) pursuant to the resignation on 22 October 2007 from that position of Councillor Rupert Bawden.

10.2 Change in Political Composition of the Council

11. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

13 motions have been submitted as set out below.

11.1 Motion submitted by Councillor Rania Khan regarding Environment and Climate Change

Proposed: Councillor Rania Khan
Seconded: Councillor Lutfa Begum

This council notes the potential for catastrophic flooding and other climatic crises in Britain and around the world, for which the relentless emission of greenhouse gases is responsible.

That rising sea levels, accompanied by a major tidal surge and spring tide are predicted to overwhelm the Thames Barrier within the next thirty years, causing devastating flooding of large parts of Tower Hamlets.

That we have a global and a local responsibility to minimise carbon emissions.

It is vital that local authorities adopt responsible environmental policies, to safeguard future generations from the ravages of climate change. These would bring other benefits including:

- Better health and less obesity in a population who feel able to cycle or walk more.
- Decreases in pollution as people are able to shop and take their leisure locally, and as more food and other consumer items are sourced locally cutting down on food miles and packaging
- Comprehensive recycling would cut down on the need for the use
or landfill sites and incinerators which themselves give off greenhouse gases and carcinogenic fumes.

- More people walking out and about in their local area should enhance community cohesion and help reduce crime and fear of crime.

**Tower Hamlets Council resolves to:**

Sign Local Agenda 21, the document agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 in which local authorities worldwide were challenged to address environmental concerns by taking actions locally.

Form an Environment Action Group involving all parties on the council, relevant officers, community groups and campaigners committed to improving Tower Hamlets' environmental responsibility. The Group’s agenda to include:

**Development:** Review use of powers to:
- Make planning permission conditional on construction of carbon neutral buildings, by incorporating energy efficiency and renewable energy sources into their building design.
- Make all new council buildings energy neutral or energy negative, and work towards all existing council buildings becoming free of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensure that all new developments have good links with public transport networks and safe cycle routes, to enable residents to consider other means of transport than the car.
- Ensure that all new developments have shops, schools and places of recreation and worship within easy walking distance.

**Retail:**
- Take active measures to promote market stallholders and retail establishments which stock locally sourced goods, cutting down on damaging food miles and boosting the local economy.

**Energy efficiency:**
- Ensure that all council buildings use energy efficient light bulbs
- Use ethical green suppliers for all council buildings
- Formally designate someone within each council building who is responsible for ensuring that electrical equipment is turned off at night and at weekends, and that heating and air conditioning does not run unnecessarily
- Maximise insulation and energy efficiency in all existing council buildings and council homes.
- All council vehicles to be low emissions

**Recycling:**
- Aim to recycle the majority of waste
- Ensure that waste is recycled locally wherever possible, and not transported miles for processing. Organic waste could be processed locally for composting. These measures could enhance the local economy and provide jobs.

**Green spaces:**
Prevent further development on existing green spaces; there is little enough in Tower Hamlets, and what there is should be sacrosanct.
11.2 Motion submitted by Councillor Fozol Miah regarding Anti-Racism and Community Cohesion

Proposed: Councillor Fozol Miah  
Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council welcomes the mix of ethnicity, race, cultures and faiths among those who live and work in Tower Hamlets. We are proud of the multi-cultural and anti-racist traditions of Tower Hamlets.

To maintain and build on those traditions, we agree to:
   a) Review and renew our community cohesion strategies and communication;
   b) Use community forums and events to restate these strategies and their importance and build civic pride in an active anti-racist tradition for east London;
   c) With partners and community organisations and service providers, review evidence of progress, tensions and racist incidents, to determine further action.

11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Abjol Miah regarding Accommodating Diversity

Proposed: Councillor Abjol Miah  
Seconded: Councillor M. A. Munim

We are committed to ensuring that housing development in Tower Hamlets meets the needs of all residents. This requires active policies and guidelines to ensure that new and refurbished housing in Tower Hamlets, and all new housing to be offered to those on council waiting and decant lists, should meet the highest design standards and accommodate the needs of large families and other practical and cultural requirements.

To ensure this the council will examine current and best practice in Tower Hamlets and elsewhere, and consult tenants and leaseholders on all aspects of Housing development design and associated conditions including: tenant involvement in design process; impact of shared toilet/bathrooms and kitchen/living space; parking restrictions on new housing developments and their implications for elderly, blue badge users etc.

11.4 Motion submitted by Councillor Mamun Rashid regarding Community Centre for Tarling Estate

Proposed: Councillor Mamun Rashid  
Seconded: Councillor Harun Miah

This council believes that all avenues must be explored to meet the funding gap of £400,000 required to allow development of the promised full-scale community centre to meet the urgent local needs.
11.5 Motion submitted by Councillor Lutfa Begum regarding the National Health Service

Proposed: Councillor Lutfa Begum  
Seconded: Councillor Ahmed Hussain

This Council considers Tower Hamlets needs excellent NHS-provided health services, with capacity for our growing population and the demands of the Olympics and we pledge to work and campaign for this. We recognise the importance of local health service providers as employers and trainers of local people. This Council opposes current NHS financial regulations leading to cutbacks and private finance schemes, and privatisation of NHS services. It calls on the Cabinet and officers, through the Partnership, the Primary Care Trust and other bodies, to investigate the costs of the Barts and London PFI programme, privatisation and cutbacks on local services, employment and training, and report publicly.

11.6 Motion submitted by Councillor Shahed Ali regarding pro-active access to council committee meetings

Proposed by: Councillor Shahed Ali  
Seconded by: Councillor Dulal Uddin

This Council Believes:

It has a duty to involve all members of the public to access the various council committee meetings we hold in the Town Hall. However, due to the location of our Town Hall, it is extremely difficult for persons to make the strenuous journey to this remote location, particularly those with physical disabilities. Accommodation facilities are restricted to 30 persons in the public gallery although we have a growing population of approximately 200,000.

This Council further believes:

Every individual has the fundamental right to play an equal role in society, and this council must as a priority pro-actively address identified needs to ensure all persons have equal access to the work of the Council. The facility to enhance transparency through the simple cost effective process of ‘web casting’ meetings is achievable

This Council resolves to:

Agree to web cast Council committee meetings subject to a cost evaluation.

This Council instructs:

(a) Officers to immediately proceed to investigate the mechanics of providing web casts of Council meetings.
(b) Officers to provide a costing forecast for this provision to be completed before the Cabinet meeting prior to the next full Council meeting.
(c) Democratic Services to identify these costs within their budget for the Municipal year 2007/08.
11.6 Motion submitted by Councillor Ahmed Hussain regarding Employment of Council Staff

Proposed by: Councillor Ahmed Hussain
Seconded by: Councillor Oliur Rahman

This Council Notes:
- That the Council is one of the biggest employers in Tower Hamlets.
- That Tower Hamlets residents have an annual average household income of less than £15,000 year, despite also having the highest earning postcode in the UK.
- That the Borough has high levels of graduate unemployment.
- That there is a rapid rise in the number of top managers currently paid over £50,000 and over £100,000, and large numbers of interim managers on very high day rates, with some paid £600 a day.

This Council Believes:
- That highly skilled staff and managers are willing to work in the public sector for reasonable pay of less than £100,000.
- That permanent staff should be appointed through equal opportunity interview processes in all but exceptional cases.
- That there is a crisis in the current budget; therefore adult services recruitment has been suspended to help save £20m throughout the council.

This Council calls on those responsible to ensure:
- Best practice and cost effective appointments processes with permanent staff appointed wherever possible.
- That salaries are capped at £100,000 pa for three years until the £20m savings is achieved.
- That resources released are redirected into training schemes for Environmental Health, Planning and other skill-shortage jobs.

11.8 Motion submitted by Councillor Oliur Rahman regarding Council-owned Buildings and Sites

Proposed by: Councillor Oliur Rahman
Seconded by: Councillor Rania Khan

This Council Notes:
- That several Council-owned buildings and sites have been sold and are being offered for sale.
- These included key places in East End History such as Poplar Town Hall and key service points such as Cheviot House.
- That some sites are disposed of at potential net loss to the public purse, when costs of renting alternative office space is calculated.
- That demolition and rebuilding on these sites does not currently maximise potential public benefit from publicly-owned assets.

This Council Believes:
- That we have a duty to manage public assets to best serve the needs of the Community.
- That achieving best value from these assets must include a calculation of current and future use values, community benefits and the cost of alternative provision of services.
This Council Resolves:
• To call on Cabinet to ensure that no Council land or buildings are sold off without a full review of current and potential uses and benefits, and full local and borough-wide consultation.

11.9 Motion submitted by Councillor Harun Miah regarding the East London Line

Proposed: Councillor Harun Miah
Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

Council notes that the London Underground’s East London Line (ELL) is due to close in December 2007 and welcomes the extension of the ELL and improved access to and from East London.

We further note that the East London line is currently operated by London Underground and that the Mayor of London has announced plans to transfer the ownership and management of the ELL from London Underground to the private sector in 2010.

The Public Private Partnership on London Underground has already created a fragmented network with frequent service disruptions. Privatisation of the East London Line will exacerbate that fragmentation and could be the thin end of the wedge with other lines and services transferred to other companies in the future.

This Council strongly urges the Mayor of London and Transport for London to retain operation and ownership of the East London Line in the public sector.

This Council strongly urges the Mayor of London and Transport for London’s Chief Operating Officer for London Rail, Howard Smith, to carry out full and active consultation prior to any decision being made, in the areas served by the ELL.

11.10 Motion submitted by Councillor Philip Briscoe regarding Special Constables

Proposed by: Councillor Philip Briscoe
Seconded by: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council Notes:

a) That Special Constables provide invaluable support to local Police forces across the country.

b) That Special Constables have the same powers as regular officers when they complete their training, including the power of arrest.

c) That Special Constables have been shown to produce results from local reassurance policing and from schemes such as “Shopwatch”.

d) That the recruitment and retention of Special Constables is difficult and results are based on local actions, such as advertising, management and high profile local championing of the role of Specials.

e) That employers can discover significant returns in staff
development, training and morale, by providing support for those who wish to serve as Special Constables.

This Council Resolves:

a) To work with the Tower Hamlets Borough Constabulary to prioritise the recruitment and retention of Special Constables.
b) To provide assistance to any recruitment and information campaigns, including the use of East End Life as an advertising channel.
c) To provide information to local businesses and employers, so that they can foster more Special Constable volunteers as a way of Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV).
d) To offer full support, via ESV, to employees of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets who wish to apply to become Special Constables.
e) To apply the full Council Tax discount that is available to Special Constables – that anyone who is a Special Constable and a council tax payer in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets will be able to claim a 50% discount in their annual bills.

11.11 Motion submitted by Councillor Alex Heslop regarding Support for the Co-operative Movement

Proposed: Councillor Alex Heslop  
Seconded: Councillor Denise Jones

This Council recognises that there is a diverse and healthy co-operative sector in Tower Hamlets with a combined turnover of approximately £50 million and also appreciates the important role that co-operatives and other social enterprises can play in community and economic regeneration initiatives. Although there are many successful co-operative enterprises operating in Tower Hamlets such as Tower Hamlets Community Credit Union, Tower Hamlets CDA and Greenwich Leisure (effectively a workers co-op), as well as several food co-ops and housing co-operatives, there is not a single council officer with a specific remit or indeed expertise for working with the co-operative & social enterprise sectors.

This Council resolves to do the following:

- Allocate responsibility for supporting the co-operative & social enterprise sectors to the Lead Member for Regeneration as well as a designated council officer who will promote and support new mutual models for the provision of community services, including housing, pre-school childcare, residential and home care, recycling and leisure. Made possible through service reviews, externalising, or re-contracting services and procurement procedures.

- Organise an annual event to celebrate International Co-operatives Day in partnership with the local Co-operative Movement; this could also involve the Tower Hamlets Partnership and its Creating and Sharing Prosperity Community Plan Action Group.
Develop procurement strategies that make a direct link between the Community Plan and other strategic objectives and contract specifications ensuring that community benefits can be fully integrated into the procurement process.

Work with the Co-operative Sector and London Development Agency to improve access to finance and support for socially and mutually owned businesses.

Work with staff and unions on a partnership basis in the creation of new cooperative services.

11.12 Motion submitted by Councillor Tim O’Flaherty regarding the closure of post offices

Proposed: Councillor Tim O’Flaherty
Seconded: Councillor Stephanie Eaton

This Council notes with concern the announcement by the Labour Government on 17th May 2007 to close 2,500 more Post Office branches across the country. This will equate to the closure of nearly one in five of the remaining Post Offices in the network.

The impact on Tower Hamlets could be the loss of at least ten Post Offices.

This Council further notes the social importance of Post Offices to the well being of both individuals and the community in Tower Hamlets.

This Council believes that the latest closure programme is unnecessary and

a) Calls on the government to:

1. End the branch closure programme;

2. Remove the Royal Mail restrictions on the Post Office to open up further business opportunities for the network;

3. Stop removing Government business from Post Offices;

4. Carry out a review of which additional Government functions could be carried out through Post Offices;

5. Invest in the Post Office network.

b) This Council calls on our MPs to lobby the Government to protect this vital service for local people.
11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding action against possible flooding

Proposed: Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Seconded: Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan

This Council notes:

That substantial parts of the Borough of Tower Hamlets are at risk of flooding

That flooding in the Summer caused loss of life, devastation to property and substantial economic cost in large parts of England

This Council supports the LGA in its call for the Labour Government to:

Take action now to improve the drainage systems and upgrade London’s flood defences to prevent damage and economic loss in the future.

Put in place measures to minimise any major impact from floods affecting the road and rail network, in order to protect the lives and livelihoods of local people.

Provide detailed advice on flood prevention and mitigation measures and contingency plans for managing loss of power and water supply in the event of floods.