

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2009**

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5  
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Mohammed Abdul Munim.

**DECISION**

That the apology be noted.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Please see minutes.

**3. MINUTES**

**DECISION**

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2009 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Mayor be authorised to sign them accordingly.

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

Please see minutes.

**5. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS OR DEPUTATIONS**

**The Order of Business was varied during the course of the meeting but for ease of reference the decision sheet is in the same order as the agenda.**

**PETITIONS**

**5.1.1 Petition re: the Exmouth Estate Residents' Board**

Mr. Dave Coker addressed the meeting in support of the petition.

**DECISION**

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director, Development and Renewal)

**5.1.2 Petition re: Latham House**

Mr. Kyle Wallace addressed the meeting in support of the petition.

**DECISION**

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director, Development and Renewal)

**5.1.3 Petition re: a safer and dust-free environment on Empson Street, E3**

Ms. Sofia Khan addressed the meeting in support of the petition.

**DECISION**

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Stephen Halsey, Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture)

The meeting agreed to suspend Procedure Rule 19.1 to allow for an additional petition, on the same matter as one of the petitions listed on the agenda, to be heard at the meeting. This additional petition was taken at item 5.1.4 below.

**5.1.4 Petition re: Make Empson Street safer and cleaner**

Ms. Nowrin Qureshi addressed the meeting in support of the petition.

**DECISION**

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Stephen Halsey, Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture)

## **DEPUTATIONS**

### **5.2.1 Deputation re: future provision at Gill Street (Limehouse Practice)**

Mr. Nuruz Zaman (with the aid of an interpreter) addressed the meeting in support of the deputation.

## **DECISION**

That the deputation be referred to the Acting Corporate Director, Adults Health and Wellbeing for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Helen Taylor, Acting Corporate Director, Adults Health and Wellbeing)

### **5.2.2 Deputation re: the effects of cuts to ESOL provision and loss of experienced ESOL teachers at Tower Hamlets College**

Mr. Saleh Ahmed addressed the meeting in support of the deputation.

## **DECISION**

That the deputation be referred to the Corporate Director, Children, Schools and Families for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Isobel Cattermole, Acting Corporate Director, Children, Schools and Families)

### **5.2.3 Deputation re: Mile End Road crossing**

Mr. Carlo Gibbs addressed the meeting in support of the deputation.

## **DECISION**

That the deputation be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

(Action by: Stephen Halsey, Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture)

## **6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no public questions received for this meeting.

**7. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

- 7.1** Question from Councillor Waiseul Islam to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah re: the use of CCTV cameras for parking enforcement in the borough.
- 7.2** Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis re: grants for building new council homes.
- 7.3** Question from Councillor Rajib Ahmed to the Lead Member for Employment and Skills, Councillor Oliur Rahman re: the Jobs Fair.
- 7.4** Question from Councillor Abjol Miah to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joshua Peck re: the watering down of legislation on the proliferation of sex encounter venues.
- 7.5** Question from Councillor Mohammed Shahid Ali to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Dr. Anwara Ali re: helping older residents to cope with the effect of the recession.
- 7.6** Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joshua Peck re: reducing incidents of homophobic hate crime.
- 7.7** Questions from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Ohid Ahmed re: the Cabinet's intentions regarding Council Tax and how our Council Tax rates compare to other London Boroughs.

The above questions, and oral supplementaries where put, were responded to by the relevant Lead Members.

Due to lack of time, questions 8 – 25 were not put. Written responses will be forwarded to the questioners.

(Action by: John S. Williams, Service Head, Democratic Services)

**8. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES****8.1 Appointment of Head of Paid Service****DECISION**

That the Council confirm the appointment of Dr. Kevan Collins, currently Interim Chief Executive, as the authority's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a permanent basis with effect from 14 October 2009.

(Action by: Chris Naylor, Corporate Director, Resources)

**8.2 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**DECISION**

That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2008-09 be noted.

(Action by: Lutfur Ali, Assistant Chief Executive)

**9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)**

No business under this heading.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

No business under this heading.

**11. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**11.1 Motion submitted by Councillor Tim Archer regarding ESOL classes at Tower Hamlets College**

Councillor Abdul Asad moved, and Councillor Oliur Rahman seconded, an amendment to the motion to delete all words after 'This Council notes' and replace the text with all words after 'This Council notes' as set out in Motion 11.2 in the agenda on the same subject. On being put to the vote this amendment was agreed.

Councillor Abjol Miah moved, and Councillor Tim Archer seconded, a further amendment to the substantive motion, as set out in Councillor Miah's name under item 11.2 in the tabled amendments report. On being put to the vote this amendment was defeated.

**DECISION**

This Council notes:

That the provision of English as a second language (ESOL) training is crucial to social cohesion in Tower Hamlets.

That in the wake of alterations to funding by the Learning and Skills Council, Tower Hamlets College reduced the amount of community based ESOL it delivered

That the College has brought to an end a long-running dispute with unions with only 6 compulsory redundancies from 400 part-time staff.

That the College continues to provide around 1350 ESOL places.

That the Council has committed money from WNF funding to commission around 650 ESOL places. £1.178m from WNF for ESOL over a period of eighteen months (April 2009 – Sept. 2010)

That further funding is being sought which would increase this to around 870 places.

That a Scrutiny Review is due to take place on 27 October to see how the Council can help the College and ensure that ESOL provision continues to reflect the needs of the community.

That the proposal by some members of the opposition to use Council reserves to shore up the College is:

- a) Outside the statutory instrument of the Council and therefore technically illegal.
- b) Not a long term solution to the College's funding problems as the Council would have to continue filling the black hole in the College's finances.
- c) Nothing more than theatricality and cynical manipulation of a serious issue for short-term political gain.

This Council resolves:

To continue working closely with the College to help it overcome its financial issues.

To lobby the government to ensure that Tower Hamlets receives the ESOL funding that is crucial to the social cohesion of the borough.

To continue increasing its own ESOL provision and commissioning to meet the needs of residents with the aim of creating 250 new ESOL places in the next 12 months.

### **11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding safeguarding the environment**

#### **DECISION**

Motion defeated.

**11.4 Motion submitted by Councillor Abjol Miah in support of a directly elected Mayor**

**DECISION**

Motion defeated.

**11.5 Motion submitted by Councillor Rachael Saunders regarding road crossing outside Mile End tube station**

**DECISION**

This Council notes that:

The pelican crossing outside Mile End Tube is extremely dangerous and that there have been five accidents on this stretch of road in the last three years, including one fatality at the beginning of 2009.

That in a meeting with local Councillors and London Assembly Member John Biggs on the 20th April Transport for London (TfL) committed to making a number of changes to the crossing to make it safer, including changing it from a pelican to a puffin crossing and reducing the traffic from three lanes to two.

That this work has still not been done 7 months later and TfL are now renegeing on their commitment to complete the works.

That this is just the latest in a long line of TfL's failures to discharge their responsibilities towards the safety of Tower Hamlets residents.

This Council believes that:

For TfL to take no action to make safer this dangerous crossing after a fatality belies a serious lack of interest in the safety of residents of Tower Hamlets.

That despite statements to the contrary, TfL and the Mayor of London see the unimpeded flow of traffic as a higher priority than the lives of pedestrians.

This Council resolves to:

Call on TfL to urgently honour their commitments made on the 20th April to make this crossing safer.

Explore using the Sustainable Communities Act to transfer responsibility and funding for pedestrian crossings to this Council.

**11.7 Motion submitted by Councillor Oliur Rahman regarding redevelopment of Limehouse Practice**

Councillor Dr Anwara Ali proposed an amendment to the motion, to insert 'the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Leader of the Council' after 'Chief Executive of the Council' in line 1 of 'This Council resolves' paragraph 1. Councillor Oliur Rahman indicated that he was willing to accept this amendment and with the agreement of the meeting altered his motion accordingly.

**DECISION**

This Council notes:

The concern of the patients of the Limehouse practice at proposals by the PCT to move the practice to from its existing site.

The opposition of GPs at the practice to the proposed move.

The concern of the residents of Farron Street at suggestions by the PCT that the practice may be moved to their location.

The flawed designs proposed by the PCT which involve the placement of the surgery on the ground floor and a basketball court on the roof – raising health and safety concerns.

The failure of several high ranking PCT officials to attend meetings with the patients of Limehouse practice, despite having agreed to do so.

This Council resolves:

To instruct the Chief Executive of the Council, the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of the PCT asking her to meet with the patients of the Limehouse practice and residents of the area.

To encourage the PCT to find the funds to redevelop the current site rather than moving to a new location.

To identify land for a temporary practice while the redevelopment is taking place.

**11.9 Motion submitted by Councillor Rania Khan regarding using new Licensing powers to close lap dancing venues**

Councillor David Snowdon moved, and Councillor Rupert Eckhardt seconded, an amendment to the motion asset out in the tabled amendments report. On being put to the vote this amendment was defeated.



**DECISION**

This Council notes that:

- We welcome the Government's plans to proceed with plans to implement the Bill to give councils more power to halt the proliferation of lap-dancing clubs, the number of which has more than doubled in the past four years to more than 300.
- The new Licensing laws allow the Council to close lap dancing venues which are inappropriately located, for example in a residential area, near schools, places of education and places of religion.
- Tower Hamlets has, at last, the opportunity to rid itself of these sexist, and unwanted sex encounter venues. It is time to give them zero tolerance.
- Women and Equalities Minister Harriet Harman's speech and her continuous support for the Police and Crime Bill, Lap Dancing Legislation
- This Legislation gives Tower Hamlets a chance to close and curb all lap dancing venues.
- For too long Tower Hamlets has been the sexual playground for City spivs and bankers.
- These venues are often associated with drugs, prostitution, human trafficking, alcohol abuse, anti-social behaviour and noise.
- The Home Office Minister, David Hanson has delivered a consultation paper last week which will require:
  - 1) All existing venues to reapply for a licence
  - 2) ALL lap dancing venues will have to apply to trade as 'sex-encounter venues'
  - 3) This should give local authorities and local stakeholders a new opportunity to stop lap dancing clubs in their area. It will allow Councils to close down clubs where Councillors and residents object.
  - 4) It is clear that Labour Deputy Leader and Women's Minister Harriet Harman has now taken against these venues.
- This council also welcomes the Women and Equalities Minister's speech to step up action to protect women from violence and sexual exploitation and to tackle human trafficking. Athens saw a doubling of women being trafficked to 40,000 women were trafficked into forced prostitutions following the Athens Games in 2004.

This Council resolves:

- To adopt a zero tolerance approach in Tower Hamlets for sex encounter venues that violate their licensing terms or that are located in inappropriate places.
- To condemn the home affairs spokesmen for Lib Dems and Conservative parties in the House of Lords for tabling a series of amendments designed to water down measures
- To condemn the Conservative party for offering £10 discount voucher from a lap-dancing club which was included in a welcome pack to conference-goers
- To welcome the move by the Women and Equalities Minister to ban City firms from claiming back tax on trips to lap dancing clubs.

- To work closely with the Police and other partner agencies to take the urgent action needed to prevent illegal trafficking of women and we need to work with ODA and other neighbouring councils to find a strategy to combat this crime.

**11.11 Motion submitted by Councillor Lutfur Rahman supporting Mayors for Peace**

**DECISION**

This Council:

Recognises the dangers to global peace and security posed by nuclear weapons proliferation.

Recognises the achievement of Mayors for Peace in coordinating more than 1700 town and cities in 122 countries to promote the total abolition of nuclear weapons and pursue a lasting peace in the world.

Resolves to join the dozens of other authorities in England and Wales who have pledged their support for Mayors for Peace.

Motions 11.6, 11.8, 11.10, 11.12 and 11.13 as listed below were not considered due to lack of time, the meeting having closed in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 (Duration of meeting).

**11.6 Motion submitted by Councillor Harun Miah regarding ‘ Parking free’ developments**

**11.8 Motion submitted by Councillor Fozol Miah regarding Overcrowding Strategy**

**11.10 Motion submitted by Councillor Dulal Uddin regarding Tower Hamlets College strike**

**11.12 Motion submitted by Councillor Mamun Rashid regarding spending cuts auction**

**11.13 Motion submitted by Councillor Abdul Munim regarding postal vote debacle.**

The meeting ended at 10.37 p.m.