

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES 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**

Members Present:

Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Ann Jackson
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Rajib Ahmed	Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan
Councillor Anwara Ali	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor M. Shahid Ali	Councillor Abdul Matin
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Abjol Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Lutfa Begum	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Philip Briscoe	Councillor Tim O'Flaherty
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Rupert Eckhardt	Councillor Lutfur Rahman
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor M. Mamun Rashid
Councillor Fazlul Haque	Councillor Muhammad Abdullah Salique
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor A A Sardar
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Clair Hawkins	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Alexander Heslop	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Shirley Houghton	Councillor Dulal Uddin
Councillor Ahmed Hussain	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Salim Ullah
Councillor Waiseul Islam	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

The meeting opened at 7.36 p.m.

The Mayor, Councillor Amhed Adam Omer in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

RESOLVED

That the apology be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made declarations of interest in items included on the agenda as follows:

Councillor	Item	Type of interest	Reason
Rajib Ahmed	5.2.2	Personal	College facility in my ward
Rajib Ahmed	11.1	Personal	Tower Hamlets College in my ward
Dr. Anwara Ali	8.2	Personal	Employed in NHS
Dr. Anwara Ali	11.7	Personal	Employed in NHS
Shahed Ali	11.1/ 11.2	Personal	Wife attends ESOL classes at Tower Hamlets College
Mohammed Shahid Ali	5.2.1	Personal	Ward Councillor for Limehouse
Mohammed Shahid Ali	11.7	Personal	Ward Councillor for Limehouse
Lutfu Begum	5.2.1	Prejudicial	Employed at the Limehouse Practice
Lutfu Begum	8.2	Personal	Employed in NHS
Lutfu Begum	11.7	Prejudicial	Employed at the Limehouse Practice
Stephanie Eaton	5.2.1	Personal	Patient at Limehouse Practice
Fazlul Haque	5.2.2	Personal	Tower Hamlets College facilities in my ward
Claire Hawkins	5.2.2	Personal	Member of UCU
Ahmed Hussain	5.2.1	Personal	Employed in NHS
Ahmed Hussain	8.2	Personal	Employed in NHS
Ahmed Hussain	11.7	Personal	Employed in NHS
Denise Jones	5.2.1	Personal	Non executive board member of Tower Hamlets PCT
Denise Jones	11.7	Personal	Non executive board member of Tower Hamlets PCT
Rania Khan	5.1.3	Personal	Councillor for Bromley-by-Bow ward and resident
Rania Khan	5.2.2	Personal	NUT member
Rania Khan	11.2	Personal	NUT member
Rania Khan	11.4	Personal	Supporter of CND
Rania Khan	11.9	Personal	Supporter of campaign and member of objectors
Shiria Khatun	5.2.2	Personal	College offers facilities in my ward
Shiria Khatun	11.1	Personal	Tower Hamlets college in my ward
Oliur Rahman	5.1.1	Personal	Exmouth Estate in my ward
Oliur Rahman	5.1.2	Personal	Latham House in my ward

Oliur Rahman	5.2.1 & 11.7	Personal	Myself and my Family are patients registered at the Limehouse Practice
Oliur Rahman	5.2.2	Personal	Tower Hamlets College in my ward
Oliur Rahman	11.1	Personal	Tower Hamlets College in my ward
Rachael Saunders	5.2.3	Personal	In my ward and campaigned on the issue
Rachael Saunders	7.4	Personal	Campaigned on this issue
Rachael Saunders	11.9	Personal	Campaigned on this issue
A. A. Sardar	11.1	Personal	Facility in my ward
Bill Turner	11.9	Personal	I have spoken publicly, and on television, against lap dancing and in favour of legislation restricting lap dancing and lap dancing venues
Abdal Ullah	5.2.2	Personal	Governor for Tower Hamlets College
Abdal Ullah	11.1	Personal	Tower Hamlets College facility is in my ward
Motin Uz-Zaman	11.7	Personal	Employed by NHS
Motin Uz-Zaman	11.8	Personal	East End Homes Board Member

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 15th 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

(1) Recent earthquakes and tsunami

The Mayor, on behalf of the Council, expressed his shock and sadness at the suffering caused to many thousands of people in South Asia and in the South Pacific region by the recent earthquakes and related tsunami in those areas. Members joined him in sending their sympathy to those affected and in particular to those residents in the borough who have family or other connections with the stricken areas; and their wholehearted support to those involved in the relief effort.

(2) Death of former Councillor Rosemary Maher

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman, said that it was with great sadness that he informed the Council of the death of former Councillor Rosemary Maher who had passed away on 6th September after a short illness. Rosemary was active in local politics for many years and served as a Councillor for the Bethnal Green South Ward from 1974 – 1978. On behalf of the Council, the Leader expressed his condolences to Rosemary Maher's family and friends.

(3) Jobs Fair – 13th October 2009

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman, informed Members that the Jobs Fair held on 13th October and organised by Councillor Oliur Rahman, had been a great success and more than 5,000 people had attended with queues going into West Ferry Road. The Leader congratulated Councillor Rahman and officers for their hard work and Councillor Alibor Choudhury, the former Lead Member for Employment and Skills, for pioneering the jobs fair.

5. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS OR DEPUTATIONS**PETITIONS****5.1.1 Petition re: the Exmouth Estate Residents' Board**

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Dave Coker addressed the meeting in support of the petition. Mr. Coker then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Marc Francis, Lead Member for Housing and Development, said that Swan Housing had advised him that the Exmouth Estate Residents Board seeks to represent all residents on the estate and that the Board works to a clearly defined constitution and holds an annual AGM that any resident may attend. The most recent AGM was on 29 September 2009, for which the agenda and nomination forms were hand delivered to every household 28 days prior to the meeting. All documents were translated. There were eight vacancies on the Estate Residents' Board Committee. Six applications were made to join the committee. Two of those residents attended the AGM and their applications were endorsed. The others did not attend but the meeting agreed that their applications can be endorsed at a later meeting. The Chair, Mr Ferris, told Councillor Francis that he was very keen for residents from other ethnic backgrounds to join the committee.

In view of the above information Councillor Francis stated that the Council was not persuaded that the Exmouth Estate Board lacks authority to speak for the residents or that it is not representative.

RESOLVED

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

5.1.2 Petition re: Latham House

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Kyle Wallace addressed the meeting in support of the petition. Mr. Wallace then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Marc Francis, Lead Member for Housing and Development, thanked Mr. Wallace for bringing the petition to the Council meeting. He said that a decision on the future of Latham House had not yet been taken but it was certainly the desire of the Council for this block to come back and be managed by Tower Hamlets Homes. Family Mosaic's lease was due to expire in 2011 but they would have the option of extending this by a further six years if they wished. A resolution therefore needed to be negotiated with Family Mosaic and talks had been held over the last year in this regard.

Although it was therefore premature for the lead Member to discuss tenancy agreements, repairs etc., Councillor Francis did say that he was very conscious of the concerns arising from the lack of security of tenure for those with assured shorthold tenancies.

Councillor Francis had visited Latham House earlier in the day and had instructed the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal, to tell Family Mosaic to clean up the litter, graffiti and urine in the stairwell as a matter of urgency. He had also asked Spitalfields HA to ensure that feedback be provided on the Anti-Social Behaviour reports that had been made by a number of tenants.

RESOLVED

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

Additional petition

At this point, Councillor Ahmed Hussain **MOVED** and Councillor Peter Golds **SECONDED** – "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.4, the Council agree to suspend Rule 19.1 to enable an additional petition on Empson Street to be heard."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**. The additional petition was taken at item 5.1.4.

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

At the invitation of the Mayor, Ms. Sofia Khan addressed the meeting in support of the petition. Ms. Khan then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Abdal Ullah, Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener thanked Ms. Khan for bringing the petition to the Council meeting. He stated that in response to residents concerns, officers from Transportation & Highways undertook a speed survey which showed that the majority of traffic was travelling below 30mph. To reduce average speed further it would be necessary to introduce a 20 mph speed limit and traffic calming would have to be introduced to make the limit self-enforcing. Officers were in dialogue with local residents about this proposal and would be attending a meeting of Coventry Cross Estate Board on 17 November to explain the potential measures which could be introduced. Officers would also be undertaking inspections to monitor compliance with the enforcement notice and permit conditions in respect of the Modern Mix concrete site.

RESOLVED

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

5.1.4 Petition re: Make Empson Street safer and cleaner

As set out above, the meeting received an additional petition on this matter as follows:-

“We, the undersigned, want an end to the lorries that speed along Empson Street. This is dangerous for our children and causes dirt and dust. We want the Council and Poplar Harca to work together to stop the lorries speeding along the road.”

At the invitation of the Mayor, Ms. Nowrin Qureshi addressed the meeting in support of the petition. Ms. Qureshi then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Abdal Ullah, Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, said that he would be meeting with the former petitioner and asked that Ms. Qureshi leave her details so that she could be contacted to join himself and the other Councillors when they visited to discuss the action that could be taken.

RESOLVED

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

DEPUTATIONS

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

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Nuruz Zaman (through an interpreter) addressed the meeting in support of the deputation. Mr. Zaman then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Dr. Anwara Ali, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, said that NHS Tower Hamlets, the local Primary Care Trust, was responsible for the support and development of primary care in the borough. The PCT had advised the Council that it had no plans to close the Gill Street Health Centre. The PCT had recently commissioned a feasibility study that would be carried out shortly over a period of 12 weeks. Whilst this was the responsibility of the PCT and not an issue that the Council had any direct control over, Members were very aware of the concerns expressed by some patients and local residents and it was proposed that the Chief Executive of the Council would write to the Chief Executive of NHS Tower Hamlets to encourage the earliest possible engagement with patients and their representatives, and the involvement of ward members in discussion of the options arising from the feasibility study.

RESOLVED

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.

Change to order of business

At this point, Councillor Oliur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Dr Anwara Ali **SECONDED** "That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow motion 11.7 to be considered as the next item of business"

On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was **agreed**.

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

The motion as printed in the agenda was **MOVED** by Councillor Oliur Rahman and was **SECONDED** by Councillor Mohammed Shahid Ali.

Councillor Dr. Anwara Ali **MOVED** 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.

The substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

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.

[Note: Councillor Denise Jones wished it recorded that she had abstained from voting on the above item as a non-executive board member of Tower Hamlets PCT.]

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

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Saleh Ahmed addressed the meeting in support of the deputation. Mr Ahmed then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Abdul Asad, Lead Member for Children, Schools and Families, responded to the matters raised by the deputation.

RESOLVED

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

Change to order of business

Councillor Tim Archer **MOVED** and Councillor Dr Emma Jones **SECONDED** – “That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow motion 11.1 to be considered as the next item of business”

On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was **agreed**.

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

The motion as printed in the agenda was **MOVED** by Councillor Tim Archer and **SECONDED** by Councillor Ahmed Hussain.

Councillor Eaton **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT** to the motion - ‘To add “for 12 months” at the end of the final paragraph.’

Councillor Archer indicated that was willing to accept the amendment and with the consent of the meeting, altered his motion accordingly.

Councillor Abdul Asad then **MOVED** and Councillor Oliur Rahman **SECONDED** a further **AMENDMENT** - ‘To delete all words after “This Council notes” and replace with all words after “This Council notes” as set out in Motion 11.2 of the agenda on the same subject.

On being put to the vote, this amendment was **agreed**.

Councillor Abjol Miah then **MOVED** and Councillor Tim Archer **SECONDED** a further **AMENDMENT** to the substantive motion as follows:-

‘To insert at the end of ‘This Council notes’, paragraph 4 - “...but has lost 1000 ESOL places as a result of cutbacks.”; and to delete from the sentence beginning “That the proposal by some members of the opposition...” through to the end and insert: “This Council resolves:

- to continue to work with Tower Hamlets College to establish quality ESOL provision in the borough that meets the needs of the community

- To lobby the government to restore and increase funding that is crucial for social cohesion in the borough

to immediately help restore the lost provision in Tower Hamlets College run courses in community venues by having a rent amnesty in council owned premises, releasing existing Working Neighbourhoods Funding money if necessary and putting in a joint council/college bid for future funding.”

On being put to the vote, this amendment was **defeated**.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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.

5.2.3 Deputation re: Mile End Road crossing

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Carlo Gibbs addressed the meeting in support of the deputation. Mr. Gibbs then responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Abdal Ullah, Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, responded to the matters raised by the deputation.

RESOLVED

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

Change to order of business

Councillor Rachael Saunders **MOVED** and Councillor Ann Jackson **SECONDED** – “That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow motion 11.5 to be considered as the next item of business”

On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was **agreed**.

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

The motion as printed in the agenda was **MOVED** by Councillor Rachael Saunders and **SECONDED** by Councillor Ann Jackson.

Following debate the motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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.

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

Can the Lead Member let us know what the situation is regarding the use of CCTV cameras for parking enforcement in the borough, especially around Brick Lane and the Royal London Hospital?

Response of the Lead Member:

I, and many other Members, are aware of the level of concern within the local community over the use made of CCTV to enforce the parking

regulations in the borough, and the extent that residents and visitors are made aware of the fact that CCTV is used for this purpose.

Following initial discussions with Officers earlier this year it was agreed that CCTV enforcement should cease in Brick Lane in March this year.

More recently further discussions concerning the area around the Royal London Hospital resulted in a decision to suspend all CCTV enforcement of the parking regulations throughout the borough from 17 September until; (a) a review of the use and deployment of CCTV cameras and Civil Enforcement Officers is completed; (b) the use of signs advising motorists that CCTV is being used to enforce traffic regulations has been reviewed and upgraded; and (c) a publicity campaign has been carried out in support of the additional signs (which has already started to appear) advising residents of the use of CCTV to enforce parking regulations in the borough.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Waiseul Islam:

Thank you for your response. CCTV concerns residents as they feel it affects their civil liberties and they are not aware the fines are being issued. There are other issues and pressures on parking provisions. What is the Council going to do to address the towing problems in the borough?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

There is sometimes misunderstanding about where responsibility for towing lies within certain areas, for example Registered Social Landlords. We take pride in making sure that visitors to the borough are welcomed. Demand on parking space is at a premium. As of this week, a decision has been taken to allocate 2 designated bays to drop off and pick up at the nearest point to the A&E department at the Royal London Hospital.

7.2 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

Why, given that there are 23,000 people on the borough's housing waiting list, did the Labour Government not give Tower Hamlets Council any money from the most recent round of grants for building new council houses, despite the borough applying for a share of the money?

Response of the Lead Member

In July, Gordon Brown and the new Housing Minister, John Healey MP gave the green light to the biggest council house building programme in almost two decades.

Tower Hamlets made an application for £1.7 million funding for 17 new council homes.

At Labour Party Conference two weeks ago, the Minister announced that Tower Hamlets had been successful.

The Council will match the Government's investment with Prudential Borrowing in order to fund the project.

Most of the homes will be three or more bedrooms to help meet the demand for larger homes.

We aim to complete them by March 2011.

These 17 new council homes are clearly not the answer to our housing crisis.

This is a modest pilot scheme for a small number of infill sites.

But now we've worked out how to make the financing stack up without penalising tenants, we will be making a further bid for the second round of funding later this month.

Alongside our policy of Buying Back former council homes to re-let – a policy opposed by the Conservative Party – these new council homes will enable us to help more overcrowded young families.

Unlike Cameron's Conservative councils, this Labour administration will do whatever it can to ensure East End families have the decent, affordable and secure homes they deserve.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Rupert Eckhardt:

I am grateful that a Government U turn was made as originally the application was rejected. I welcome the £1.7m and it is a step in the right direction. However, under the Conservative Government 1979-1997, more social housing was built each year than under the Labour government. When will the same amount of houses be built by Labour as were when the Conservatives were in power?

Summary of Lead Member's response

In fact it was Labour Councils who were building houses while Mrs. Thatcher's Government tried to stop us. Councillor Archer didn't support our bid for new council homes. He didn't support Labour's campaign to keep council rents low. And he finds any excuse to reject planning applications for new social housing. A Conservative government would be no friend of council tenants or families waiting for a home. Hammersmith and Fulham Council are knocking down council estates to replace them with luxury flats. The Conservative Shadow

Housing Minister is encouraging Tory councillors to block new social housing, and all the while Cameron's advisers are urging him to scrap tenants' security of tenure and push up rents to market levels.

7.3 Question from Councillor Rajib Ahmed to the Lead Member for Employment and Skills, Councillor Oliur Rahman

Can the Lead Member for Employment and Skills tell us whether the Jobs Fair he promised us is being delivered, which organisations are taking part and how he feels it will benefit our young people?

Response of the Lead Member:

Yes. The Jobs Fair which is called 'You're Hired' is being delivered. It is taking place on the 13 October, 10.30 – 19.00 at the East Winter Gardens in Canary Wharf. The venue which usually costs around £8,000 per Day has kindly been provided free of charge for the Canary Wharf Group PLC for three days (allowing for set-up and take-down) saving us around £24,000 and freeing up financial resources for wide scale promotion, marketing collateral and equipment hire – allowing us to deliver what should be a £35,000 - £40,000 event for less than a third of this cost.

The event has been publicised through various advertising online and offline and PR in addition to the distribution of 10,000 flyers by Job Centre Plus, posters, as well as a direct mail and personal visit to all 440 NEETS in the borough.

To gain some economy of scale and provide a rounded offer, You're Hired is also incorporating a Children's Services recruitment event called 'Your Next Move'. In total there will be more than 30 stands with a variety of employers (all with current vacancies) and training/skills providers. These include:

Cream	Employment Solutions	ASDA
Metropolitan Police	Argos	Triangle Recruitment
Royal Mail	Tesco	Novotel
Poundland	Wilkinsons	Four Seasons
Next	Armed Forces	International Hotel
Waitrose	Royal Navy	Olympic Jobs
Hospitality Industry	London Fire Brigade	LBTH Council
NHS Tower Hamlets	Hackney Community	EURES
	Transport	
CCAP	Marks & Spencer	Job Centre Plus
Skillsmatch	Action Dog	TGB Learning
Ocean Somali	Headliners	Tower Hamlets College
Commuinity org.		
City Gateway	Connexions	Rathbone
Connexions	Personal Best	
Partnership		

This will provide huge benefits to not just young people, but job-seekers of all ages. It brings together lots of local employers with current job vacancies, which people will be able to apply for on the day, as well as a support structure including CV services, and around 40 Job Centre Plus staff offering one-to-one support to help people apply for these positions. This is a unique opportunity for Tower Hamlets Residents with an array of jobs on offer ranging from entry-level positions to more senior and graduate positions including full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal vacancies – all accessible to residents in Tower Hamlets.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Rajib Ahmed:

Thank you. What other plans do you have to reduce unemployment in Tower Hamlets?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

I have already had meetings and the next event is to be held on 26th October at the Tower Hamlets College. This will be the biggest public sector employer event in the borough and those people who were unable to get into yesterday's Jobs Fair will be invited along with NEET youngsters. I would like to thank Paul Armitage who worked constantly to make the Jobs Fair such a success and my Executive Support Officer, Stephen Hartley for all his hard work.

7.4 Question from Councillor Abjol Miah to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joshua Peck

Does the Leader of the Council share with me my dismay that the Lapdancing Association has spent at least £30,000 lobbying to try to water down legislation that will enable councils to clamp down on the proliferation of sex encounter venues, that Liberal Democrat and Tory peers have moved amendments in the unselected House of Lords to try to water down this legislation and that the Tory Front Bench in the House of Lords intends to try again when parliament returns from the summer recess and does he not also agree that this shows that the Tory Party, which proclaims to be the party of "family values" appears to be prefer supporting the profits of these sex encounter venues than the fight against the degradation and exploitation of women?

Response of the Lead Member:

The Council through the Cabinet approval of the Overview and Scrutiny review of the Lap Dancing and Striptease business in LBTH encouraged Central Government to change legislation to include Lap Dancing and Striptease premises as Sex Encounter Establishments. The proposals for law changes that have been produced by Central

Government will give the Council more control over this activity. Central Government appear to be committed to introduce this legislation in the new year and it should be on the statute book before April 2010 with the transition process due to be completed by April 2011.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Abjol Miah:

Will the Deputy Leader of the Council write to community organisations in Tower Hamlets to alert them to the attempts of the Tory front bench to water down legislation that is already too weak, and to members of the House of Lords and the House of Commons to inform them of the motion unanimously passed in this council in support of tough legislation to control sex encounter venues and urge peers and MPs to support two amendments which will address the flaws in the legislation identified by the campaigning group Object?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

I am more than happy to speak jointly to community groups and members to publicise this matter and I will also write to Labour Ministers on the issue.

7.5 Question from Councillor Mohammed Shahid Ali to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Dr. Anwara Ali

Can the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing tell us what is being done by the Council to help older residents cope with the effect of the recession and are there any long-term plans to deal with the increase of elderly people in the borough?

Response of the Lead Member:

Many older people in Tower Hamlets are on low and fixed incomes, so are particularly affected by the economic recession. National research suggests that older people are cutting down significantly on spending, often on basic items such as food, and social isolation is increasing as a result of cutting down spending on social outings. This Council is committed to supporting older people and has invested significantly in LinkAge Plus since the two year DWP pilot finished in June 2008. This network of organisations provides a wide range of opportunities for older people, including access to advice on benefits and a wide range of social activities. It is open to all older people in the Borough and reaches out to those who are not in contact with other services. Between September 2008 and June 2009, the LinkAge Plus Partnership received 1,145 new referrals. The Council is one of a very small number of Councils who do not charge residents for Home Care services. The Council is proud to have one of the top performing adult social care services in the country and provides a particularly high level of support for the most needy older people to remain living in their own homes. The Council also supports an extensive range of third sector

activity for older people including commissioning lunch clubs across the Borough. Proposals for additional ways in which the Council can support older people at this difficult time are currently being developed and will be considered by the Cabinet in November.

Whilst the population of Tower Hamlets is a younger than average population, nevertheless the older population is projected to grow. The number of over 65s is projected to increase by 7% over the next ten years - from 18,041 in 2008 to 19,287 in 2018. The Council, working in partnership with the Primary Care Trust, carries out a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which looks at need over a 5 -10 year period. Through this work the Adults Health and Wellbeing Directorate is planning for the future needs of the population. Two recent examples include assessment of the future need for Extra Care Sheltered Housing and the needs of older people with mental health problems such as dementia. Future work will include developing the Council's response to the recently published Government Strategy "Building a Society for all Ages". This will identify further ways in which the Council as a whole can respond to the demographic changes in our population.

The Council has won a Beacon Award this year for its active engagement with older citizens, and it is through this continued engagement that we will develop robust plans for the future.

No supplementary question was asked.

7.6 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joshua Peck

What is being done to reduce the incidence of homophobic hate crime and to reduce fear of crime among the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender section of our community?

Response of the Lead Member:

I recognise that there is real anger and concern in the community about continued homophobic intimidation and attacks. The Council and police have attended a number of meetings on this issue with LGBT residents, including the meeting organised recently by Councillor Eaton, for which I'd like to thank her.

Tower Hamlets does have a good record on tackling hate crime. Nationally, Tower Hamlets is recognised as a best practice borough for our hate crime and involves a range of measures including support for victims, work with schools and young people, promoting incident reporting and equipping staff across different services and agencies to respond appropriately to reports.

In addition to this borough-wide work, there are a number of initiatives that have been put in place in the last 12 months in response to the concerns of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and the homophobic stabbing that took place on Boundary Street last year. These include:

- Increased police patrols and visibility around Arnold Circus and Hackney Road
- Targeted initiatives to reduce street drinking in the area
- Plans to increase street lighting in the area
- Work by the Police with the Schools Out campaign to raise awareness of LGBT issues in local schools
- Regular meetings by the Police LGBT Liaison Officer with licensees of LGBT venues in the borough to provide reassurance to the community and gain understanding of problems
- Outreach to young people and youth groups in the Bethnal Green area by ten No Place for Hate Youth Champions, with a focus on challenging prejudice, including homophobia
- Launch of the 'No Place for Homophobic Hate' bill board campaign as part of Tower Hamlets LGBT History Month February 2009
- Outreach work by the Council's Youth Service Rapid Response Team in the area. The team's van will carry a 'No Place for Hate' campaign wrap to increase visible activity in the area

However, I am concerned that attacks are continuing and our response is not therefore being entirely successful. I met last week with the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Communities, Localities and Culture to discuss this issue and ask them to review our response, with a view to swiftly pulling together an improved action plan. I will write to Councillor Eaton when this has been agreed as well as reporting on it to the first meeting of the relaunched LGBT Community Forum.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton:

I was grateful for your support at the meeting and I welcome what you are proposing. Is there anything that we can do to increase the number of Police Liaison Officers? Often, victims of crime do not feel comfortable reporting incidents.

Summary of Lead Member's response:

This has been raised before and it is something that also requires more attention from mainstream Police. The crime needs to be reported. I am happy to raise the issue of more Police Liaison Officers.

7.7 Questions from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Can the Lead Member for Resources and Performance tell us what the Cabinet's intentions are regarding Council Tax and how our Council Tax rates compare to other London Boroughs?

Response of the Lead Member:

The Council tax in Tower Hamlets is the sixth lowest in London.

We realise that many local people are going through hard financial times during the present recession – so we're determined to keep local bills down for next year.

Cllr Harper-Penman will appreciate that we are still developing our budget proposals for 2010/11 and these won't be completed until the new year. However, I can tell her that I am working hard to ensure that Tower Hamlets will deliver a council tax freeze in 2010/11.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman:

Can the Lead Member assure me that this Council Tax freeze can be done without cuts to frontline services?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

Yes. The Council will ensure the best value for money in all areas. Further investments will be made and I am working with my colleagues to deliver this.

In accordance with Rule 12.10 (expiry of time limit), questions 8 – 25 were not put. Written responses would be forwarded to the questioners.

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

8.1 Appointment of Head of Paid Service

An addendum report of the Joint Director of Human Resources was tabled, setting out the recommendation of the Appointments Sub-Committee held on 13 October 2009.

Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** the recommendation as set out in the tabled report.

After discussion, the recommendation was put to the vote and it was **AGREED**, with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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.

8.2 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting considered the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2008/09.

Councillor Abdul Asad **MOVED** and Councillor Lutfur Rahman **SECONDED** the recommendation as set out in the report.

Councillor Abdul Asad, former Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report. After discussion, the recommendation was put to the vote and **AGREED**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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

Change to order of business

At this point, Councillor Rania Khan **MOVED** and Councillor Lutfur Rahman **SECONDED** – "That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow motion 11.9 to be considered as the next item of business"

On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was **agreed**.

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

The motion as printed in the agenda was moved by Councillor Rania Khan and seconded by Councillor Bill Turner.

Councillor David Snowdon **MOVED** and Councillor Rupert Eckhardt **SECONDED** an amendment as follows:-

"Delete all after the word 'club' in the first sentence and insert

'We note that these clubs have proliferated entirely due to legislation passed by this Labour Government during their current period in office.

The council notes that following national representation, changes in licensing of lap dancing clubs are proposed in the Police and Crime Bill, currently passing through Parliament.

The Conservative Party have constantly called on the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to provide clearer guidance to local authorities to enable them to use the powers they possess to full effect.

This council notes that:

Baroness Neville Jones, Conservative spokeswoman in the House of Lords is moving for local authorities to have the power to decide whether a lap dancing club is appropriate for their area.

Dominic Grieve MP, Shadow Justice Secretary will be supporting proposals to create a new criminal offence relating to prostitution and tighten controls around lap dancing clubs.

Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, will support Boroughs who want to control the proliferation of lap dancing clubs in their areas.

The council agrees that had the Labour Government listened to the concerns raised when they introduced their licensing laws, then it is unlikely that the country would have seen the proliferation of such premises'."

Councillor Joshua Peck **MOVED** and Councillor Bill Turner **SECONDED** – "That under Rule 15.12.1, the question be now put." This procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

Councillor Snowdon's AMENDMENT was then put to the vote and was **defeated**.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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 Debs 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.

Change to order of business

At this point, Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Bill Turner **SECONDED** – “That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow motion 11.11 to be considered as the next item of business”

On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was **agreed**.

11.11 Motion submitted by Councillor Lutfur Rahman supporting Mayors for Peace

The motion as printed in the agenda was moved by Councillor Lutfur Rahman and seconded by Councillor Fazlul Haque.

On being put to the vote, the motion was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

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.

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

There was no business under this item.

10. OTHER BUSINESS (IF ANY)

There was no business under this item.

11. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Motions 11.1/11.2, 11.5, 11.7, 11.9 and 11.11 had been considered at earlier points in the meeting.

11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding safeguarding the environment

Councillor Stephanie Eaton **MOVED** and Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan **SECONDED** the motion as set out in the agenda papers

On being put to the vote the motion was **defeated**.

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

Councillor Abjol Miah **MOVED** and Councillor Dulal Uddin **SECONDED** the motion as set out in the agenda papers

Councillor Rachael Saunders **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** – “That under Rule 15.12.1 the question be now put.” This procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

Councillor Miah’s motion was then put to the vote and was **defeated**.

The Mayor then closed the meeting in accordance with Rule 9 (duration of meeting).

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.

Mayor