

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JULY 2010**

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

**Members Present:**

Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed	Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shelina Aktar	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Councillor Craig Aston	Councillor Mohammed Abdul Mukit MBE
Councillor Lutfu Begum	Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Mizan Chaudhury	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Zara Davis	Councillor Lutfur Rahman
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor Gloria Thienel
Councillor Judith Gardiner	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Carlo Gibbs	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Denise Jones	

**The Mayor, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman in the Chair**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Rajib Ahmed, Rofique Ahmed, Ann Jackson, Dr. Emma Jones, Ahmed Omer and Oliur Rahman.

**RESOLVED**

That the apologies be noted.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Type of interest</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Khales Uddin Ahmed	5.1.2	Personal	Member of Poplar Harca in Devons Estate
Abdul Asad	10.2	Personal	My wife works for THH. I have a frozen pension. I work for Bishop Challoner School which is a Youth Service Provider for LAP 4
Judith Gardiner	11.1	Personal	Employee of Probation Service
Rania Khan	5.1.2	Personal	Former member of the Poplar Harca Board
Shiria Khatun	5.1.2	Personal	Former member of the Poplar Harca Board. Husband also sessional worker for Poplar Harca Board
Shiria Khatun	11.1	Personal	Works for Mental Health Charity in Tower Hamlets, working with young people with mental health issues including some youth offenders
Helal Uddin	5.1.2	Personal	My organisation (Bromley by Bow Centre) has close connections with Poplar Harca. I am also a member of the Devon's Estate Board

**3. MINUTES****RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2010 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Mayor be authorised to sign them accordingly.

#### 4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

##### (1) Additional urgent report re: Special Responsibility Allowances

The Mayor said that he had agreed that an additional urgent report would be considered at the meeting on the Cabinet's recommendation regarding Special Responsibility Allowances. This had been tabled and would be considered later in the meeting at agenda item 8.2. The item had not been included in the original agenda because the Cabinet meeting had taken place after the agenda had been printed.

##### Change to order of business

At this point, Councillor David Edgar **MOVED** and Councillor Helal Abbas **SECONDED** – "That under Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be changed to allow item 10.2 to be considered as the next item of business."

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

#### 10.2 Draft Statement of Accounts 2009-2010

Councillor David Edgar, Lead Member for Resources, introduced the report. He then **MOVED** and Councillor Helal Abbas **SECONDED** – "That the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed."

Following debate, Councillor Helal Abbas **MOVED** and Councillor Peter Golds **SECONDED** – "That the time limit for Councillor Edgar's Right of Reply be extended to allow Councillor Edgar to address each of the issues that were raised during the debate." The Mayor informed Members that this was at his discretion and he agreed to extend the time limit as necessary.

Following Councillor Edgar's reply, the recommendations were put to the vote and were **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the draft final Statement of Accounts for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 be approved.
2. That it be noted that the accounts will now be submitted for audit.
3. That the progress made towards meeting the International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) be noted.

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

### **PETITIONS**

#### **5.1.1 Petition re: Mayoral Election**

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

Councillor Joshua Peck, Deputy Leader of the Council, thanked staff in Electoral Services and all other Council staff for their work in the run up to the last election. He went on to say that he had witnessed the opening of postal votes that had been returned and he confirmed that each one was checked. 75% had been received back and all had been verified and has signatures and dates of birth checked. The Election laws do not permit the Returning Officer to ask the Presiding Officers at the Polling Stations to require personal identification. The legal position with regard to postal votes is that individuals must register with a signature and date of birth. The difficulties that this borough and other boroughs across London had in the last election related to voters registered in the last days before the close of the electoral register. This should be ameliorated when personal registration is implemented in 2015, which will require additional information in the form of the individual's national insurance number which can then be checked against the national register.

Councillor Peck stated that it was not within the Council's powers to do anything other than lobby central government for changes to the law to improve the registration process. In this regard the Returning Officer was lobbying the Ministry of Justice for a change in the law to close the register for applications to register a postal vote at least 10 days before the final close of the register, this would give the Returning Officer a short period to investigate addresses with multiple occupants and remove names where voters were no longer present. The Returning Officer was assisting the police in their ongoing investigation of 88 properties in the Borough.

### **RESOLVED**

That the petition be referred to the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

#### **5.1.2 Petition re: Devons Estate Blocks**

Petition withdrawn.

### **DEPUTATIONS**

**5.2** There were no deputations.

**6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC****6.1 Question from Mr. Terry McGreenera to the Lead Member for Housing, Heritage and Planning, Councillor Marc Francis**

“Following the admission by Liam Byrne, Labour’s Chief Secretary to the Treasury on leaving the Treasury that there is no money and confirmed by the incoming Housing Minister, Grant Snapps, that the coffers are empty for affordable housing and that a ‘myriad’ of schemes will face the axe, what is the point of pursuing the objective of achieving the standards to obtain £200 million if there is no money at the end of the rainbow?”

**Response of the Lead Member, Councillor Marc Francis**

The Council’s objectives in establishing our Arms Length Management Organisation -Tower Hamlets Homes -were two fold:

Firstly, to improve the quality of housing management services as the ALMO must attain a minimum 2 star inspection rating from the Audit Commission. The council is working closely with Tower Hamlets Homes to improve services to tenants and leaseholders and prepare fully for inspection this November. Improving the standard of housing management is an important objective in its own right.

But the second objective is to unlock the £220 million Decent Homes funding promised earlier this year by the Labour Government to bring our remaining 13,000 homes up to a modern standard. While Tower Hamlets Council has not been told that funding may not be available if it does attain a 2 star inspection rating, I can say that I share Mr McGreenera’s anxieties.

The Tories have never made the case for more investment in social housing and the past two months have shown that the Lib Dems will sell their own grandmother for seats at the Cabinet table.

As with other housing projects that require government-funding, we are working hard to ensure that those commitments are honoured. Along with the Labour Leaders of Lambeth and Lewisham, which also have Round 6 ALMOs, we have made representations direct to the Housing Minister, Grant Shapps MP. Only last week in the House of Commons, our newly-elected MP for Bethnal Green & Bow, Rushanara Ali, asked the Prime Minister directly if he would honour Labour’s commitment to our tenants. He studiously failed to do so and instead, he made a vague statement about it all being looked at in the autumn Spending Review.

Well, I don’t need to tell anyone here that reneging on this commitment would be an absolute disgrace and so I hope that’s a message Cllr Archer and his colleagues will make sure is heard in Tory HQ.

In the meantime, we are making good progress with our own council-funded Decent Homes Pilots and I hope to be in a position to make a statement about additional pilot schemes in the next month or so.

**Summary of supplementary question from Mr. McGrenera:**

I would imagine that Tower Hamlets has as much chance of getting £220M as finding a pot of gold. Isn't it the case that Labour's whole policy on housing has been a failure? Would Councillor Francis admit that and will he give his apologies to local residents?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

Mr. McGrenera has been a long standing critic of our housing policy. But as the elected representatives of this community, we have the authority to make decisions in the interests of our council tenants and leaseholders.

Whatever our differences over the remedy, there is no disagreement about the threat to council housing and social tenants from this Tory and Lib Dem Government. In just two months, they have cut our £2 million Housing & Planning Delivery Grant.

They are introducing caps on Housing Benefit, which will leave one thousand households in the private rented sector worse off every week and dump a £1-2 million bill on local Council Tax payers for homeless households in temporary accommodation. I expect our £15 million annual Supported Capital Expenditure for major works in 2011/12 will be chopped too. We all know this is the thin end of a very long wedge.

**6.2 Question from Ms. Kate Gould to the Lead Member for Housing, Heritage and Planning, Councillor Marc Francis re: redevelopment of former Safeway site, Bow**

This question was not put at the meeting as the questioner did not attend. A written response would be sent to the questioner.

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

**7.1 Question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar**

"On 24 May 2010 Chancellor George Osborne announced reductions in public sector spending of £6.243 billion pounds. £1.165 billion of the total budget cut will come from grants to local government. Can the Lead Member inform us of the magnitude of problems Tower Hamlets will face because of this cut and how the Council is going to embark upon the deficit issue without cutting front line services? "

**Response of the Lead Member:**

It is extremely unhelpful that the Government has introduced grant cuts part way through this financial year, cutting £4.125m of grants which the Council had been told it would receive and which we had made plans to spend. The Government also told us that we would no longer receive other grants which had amounted to £4.9m last year. The Cabinet's response to the in-year cuts was considered and agreed at Cabinet on July 7<sup>th</sup>. We have acted swiftly to ensure that the Council's budget remains in balance and that the impact of the cuts is minimised as much as possible. The work we have done in the past to ensure that the Council's finances are well managed and our financial position is healthy helps us to do this.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed:**

You have mentioned that the former leadership was absolutely committed to reducing overcrowding. Can the Lead Member explore all areas to keep investing in housing?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

Reducing overcrowding is a key priority for this council. It is an important part of the funding for housing and a reduction in grant monies will have an impact on all areas but we remain committed to doing everything we can to address the problem of overcrowding.

**7.2 Question from Councillor Zara Davis to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun**

"With 28% of children in Tower Hamlets having been victims of bullying, would the Lead Member explain what is being done to tackle bullying in our schools?"

**Response of the Lead Member:**

Making sure that children and young people feel safe is a major priority for the Local Authority. *Safe to Learn* (DCSF 2007) provides the legal framework for anti-bullying. While schools must set their own policies, appropriate to their particular situations and intakes, it is important that the Local Authority sets a standard and offers a framework for schools to use. The Anti-Bullying policy guidance which is contained in the *Tower Hamlets Anti-Bullying Resource Pack* sets out for school staff and governors the LA's advice on how to address the issue.

The *Anti-Bullying Resource Pack* identifies a spectrum of types of bullying, including gender, racist and homophobic bullying and the bullying of gifted and talented learners, those with special needs and disabled or disfigured children as well as cyber bullying. We provide strategies on dealing with all these forms of bullying and developing a

whole school ethos to make every member of the school community feel respected and valued.

The development of the LBTH guidance for schools was a multi-agency process involving representatives from the Police, Victim Support, Healthy Schools and the Educational Psychology Service. The regional office of the Anti-bullying Alliance provided expertise and guidance. It was presented to the Tower Hamlets LGBT forum and there was wide consultation.

In addition to the *Tower Hamlets Anti-Bullying Resource Pack*, the authority:

- supports schools to implement the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum which has anti-bullying as a key theme.
- provides universal and targeted training and/or brokers training to all schools to develop and enhance staff skills in preventing incidents of bullying and responding to bullying when it occurs.
- gives guidance to schools on how they can begin to assess the scale of the problem. To support this, the council offers them the use of a free electronic survey which provides children with an anonymous means of making their views known on the scale of bullying and the school's strategies.
- has produced 6000 copies of the anti bullying calendar (designed by pupils) which were given to every year 6 and year 7 pupil in the borough as well as to a wide range of voluntary and statutory agencies
- is affiliated to Stonewall's Education Champions programme to tackle homophobia and has produced a poster for school staff rooms giving staff strategies for tackling homophobic comments from pupils
- organises an annual anti-bullying week, which in November 2009, included an anti-bullying film competition for pupils.
- Has provided a beginners guide to the safe use of the internet and mobile phones and circulated this through schools.

Primary and secondary schools in the borough have vigorously developed anti-bullying policies and practices. The LA requests that they provide copies of their policies and then tests them against best practice and provides feedback.

The borough's anti-bullying initiatives are highly acclaimed by the stakeholders. The 2009 National Audit Commission survey with Head teachers shows that Tower Hamlets Head Teachers perceive the borough's support for combating bullying is 'between good and excellent' (3.03; 1-4 points), which exceeds the national councils' average (2.69) and places the borough in the top 25%.

The National Strategy Advisor agreed that the borough's anti-bullying practice falls within 'Enhancing' – the highest of four levels of competence– in the National Strategies self-review framework in 2009.



It states, 'The planned approach developed by the local authority has had a clear impact on reducing incidents of bullying over a sustained period of time'.

While we are never complacent, as any case of bullying is one too many, the Tell Us Survey conducted with school age pupils tell us that our pupils are less likely to be bullied than the national average and more likely to be confident in their schools' ability to deal with bullying than average.

See also – report and action plan (April 2010) arising from the Scrutiny Challenge Session on Anti-Bullying Initiatives in Schools held January 2010.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Zara Davis:**

Thank you for your response. There is an extraordinarily high level of bullying in this borough which suggests the policies of the Lead Member and her predecessors have failed. There should be zero tolerance. Do you agree that the new powers for teachers will assist and will you take responsibility for encouraging them to use these powers?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

I have always worked with teachers in this borough to tackle bullying. There are a range of initiatives including buddy systems in primary schools and prefects in secondary schools and a service for talking to the families involved. You are not suggesting anything new. I would like to offer you the opportunity to spend half a day with me to help you gain experience in this area.

**7.3 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Helal Abbas**

“Can the Leader explain the steps the Council took to ensure the safety of Tower Hamlets residents in light of the recent events involving the Troxy, English Defence League (EDL) and United East End?”

**Response of the Lead Member**

There is no place for extremism of any kind in Tower Hamlets. When the Council learned of the demonstration planned by the English Defence League (EDL) for Sunday June 20<sup>th</sup> to coincide with an all day Islamic Conference due to be held at the Troxy, where a number of invited speakers had allegedly expressed extremist views, we urged residents to be vigilant in the face of what was a blatant attempt at division along crude racial and religious lines.

The Council had previously encouraged the Troxy to sign up to our 'No Place for Hate' campaign and they were happy to do so. So far, over 700 people and 70 organisations have joined the campaign against all extremism in the Borough.

The Islamic Conference was not supported in any way by the Council and we urged the Troxy to cancel it, in the interests of community safety and cohesion. We also liaised with the Police, Interfaith Forum and other local partners to ensure that the safety of Tower Hamlets residents.

We have also worked hard to call for calm, working with the police to ease fears involving rumour and counter rumour about people entering the borough with the intent of causing trouble. The council continues to work with the Police to ensure the safety of the community and we urge local residents to exercise restraint in the face of provocation.

We were pleased when the Troxy's management agreed to cancel the Conference and when the EDL, in response, cancelled their planned demonstration as well. By working with all sections of the Tower Hamlets community we managed to support and promote the values of diversity and tolerance using the democratic process.

United East End planned and held a counter demonstration on June 20<sup>th</sup>. As Leader of the Council I attended and spoke at the event to provide reassurance to residents that the council in its leadership role will do everything in its power to prevent outside elements from causing instability and unrest in Tower Hamlets. The Council worked directly with organisers and the Police to ensure that the event was safe and peaceful.

We will not stand by and allow the Tower Hamlets community to be divided by those who do not appreciate and value our borough's wonderful diversity, of which we are proud.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed:**

Will the Leader take a specific interest in the "No place for Hate" campaign and promote the pledge as I am not sure how many Councillors have signed up for it, and also promote the branding of the campaign?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

I very much welcome the 'No Place for Hate' campaign and am fully committed and involved in it. I welcome your question and agree we should all be part of it. The Communications Team and the Cabinet will play a full role in promoting the campaign.

**7.4 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Lead Member for Culture and Creative Industries, Councillor Denise Jones**

“Will the Lead Member outline the most recent actions undertaken regarding the future of Poplar Baths?”

**Response of the Lead Member:**

In November 2009, following adoption of the Leisure Facilities Strategy the previous month, Cabinet allocated accelerated delivery funding to a range of key priorities, including Poplar Baths. Immediate works included:

- removal of pigeon droppings, asbestos and other waste materials
- protecting the building from further pigeon infestation by installing netting and boarding to openings
- installation of anti-climb measures, metal screens to lower level windows and doors, and intruder alarms
- installation of boarding to prevent water penetration into the historic building

These works have stabilised the building and allow for further detailed investigation and design work in line with the Cabinet decision (April 2010) to re-open Poplar Baths. A security regime has also been put in place to ensure the building is protected.

A Project Board has been set up to progress the scheme. The Corporate Director, Development and Renewal will be bringing a report back shortly.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Tim Archer:**

Is it not the case that this was a cynical unfunded election bribe or can you assure me that you have the money to honour this promise to the local people?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

The Corporate Director, Development and Renewal has been instructed to bring back a design and then public consultation will follow. We will know about funding by the Autumn.

**7.5 Question from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun**

“Can the Lead Member tell us what activities the Council plans for young people in the Borough over the summer school holidays?”

**Response of the Lead Member:**

Over the summer holiday period the Youth Service and CLC are operating a number of projects throughout the borough to engage young people into constructive activities.

**PAYP:** Through Positive Activities for Young People, we have 57 projects taking out of which 45 are LAP based and 12 projects are targeted and borough wide. Total allocation to deliver PAYP over the summer period is £266,417.

**Summer Grant:** Summer Grants support 49 projects, out of which 36 are LAP based and 13 are borough wide initiatives. Total amount allocated to deliver summer scheme £95,760.

**Summer Fun Brochure:** this was distributed to all households in Tower Hamlets, listing all projects/initiatives within the PAYP and Summer Grants listed above. It will also include listings of sports, leisure and family fun oriented activities operating over the summer period. It is included in East End Life this week.

**INNOV8: Summer Festival of Arts, Sports and Music:** The projects will be aimed at all young people in the borough - from toddlers through to late teenagers - and some will be aimed at targeted groups, whilst others will be universally accessible by young people. The projects will be delivered through a combination of partnerships with third sector organisations that specialise in the different project genres and central delivery by the local authority.

Tower Hamlets is spending a total of £62,753 between June and August 2010 on a variety of arts, sports and music projects that will comprise the INNOV8 summer festival. This includes a contribution of £38,903 from the Find Your Talent programme.

**Evaluation & Monitoring:**

All projects will be evaluated to determine the outputs, outcomes and reach of the projects (ensuring that equalities streams are adhered to). All YCS funded projects will be captured by E-YS Management Information System. This information will then feed into an overarching analysis of the outcomes and outputs to inform future strategy for summer programmes, best practice engagement approaches and new ways to further encourage participation by young people in programmes delivered across Tower Hamlets.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman:**

Thank you for that. Can I ask the Lead Member for her assurance that community cohesion will be promoted with our young people?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

You have my personal assurance on that. I work as an employment specialist with young people and I also refer you to the summer university brochure, copies of which are available. I recently met with the Youth Champions in the borough and I commend their work with young people from all parts of the community.

**7.6 Question from Councillor David Snowdon to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Helal Abbas**

"The Tower Hamlets partnership is facing, by my count, its third restructuring in as many years. There is great uncertainty amongst Steering Group members as to what the future holds, and a co-chairs meeting attended by myself and Cllr Jackson showed key officers to be incapable of explaining clearly exactly how the new structures will work. Will the lead member explain how the new structures will work, especially the relationship between the Ward Panels and the Steering Groups?"

**Response of the Lead Member:**

The infrastructure and support for the Tower Hamlets Partnership are largely funded by Working Neighbourhood Fund grant which comes to an end in March 2011. This coupled with the financial pressures across the public sector requires a rethink, both of our Community Plan as a whole, and consequently how we deliver a Tower Hamlets Partnership infrastructure and governance arrangements which are fit for purpose to support a refreshed Community Plan and are sustainable going forward.

We are consequently currently undergoing a period of review and reflection of the future of the Partnership infrastructure, which will involve consultation with residents, partners and steering group members. The Community Plan refresh and development of the Citizen Engagement Strategy will help clarify the new priorities and the arrangements to support their delivery over the coming months.

As part of the refresh of the Community Plan, residents will be asked to help re-define local priorities and include consideration of the difficult choices faced by the Partnership in achieving the required savings and in the context of reduced public finances. The consultation will also focus on how to unlock the potential of communities to play a more active and independent role in their local areas and consider the citizens' role in the delivery of the Community Plan.

The development of new local governance arrangements is a key part of the emerging Citizen Engagement Strategy and it is planned that a proposed way forward will be agreed by the Partnership by November 2010. Any new model must respond to the way citizens and local

residents want to stay engaged and hold public services to account including improved communications and methods for consultation.

The Partnership Executive and Board have already had initial discussions about these matters and a LAP Steering Group conference is planned for July/August to consult more widely.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor David Snowdon:**

I know there are plans on the table because I have seen them and Councillor Jackson has seen them but they cannot be explained by the officers. Can the Leader of the Council explain how the new plans will work?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

The current structure costs £2M and with the cuts the coalition government are proposing, we cannot sustain that structure. But we are committed to partnership working through the challenging times ahead and a consultation process is in place. I look forward to your comments.

**7.7 Question from Councillor Shafiqul Haque to the Lead Member for Environment, Councillor Shahed Ali**

“Could the Lead Member confirm what steps he has taken to address the parking and CCTV issue surrounding Whitechapel, New Road and adjacent to Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel?”

**Response of the Lead Member:**

There are essentially two issues here; the management of parking and the use of CCTV for enforcement.

Tower Hamlets is a densely populated borough and experiences high volumes of traffic throughout the day. The primary purpose of the road network is the safe and unimpaired passage of vehicles, not the parking of cars.

As a result of the exceptionally high demand for parking, almost all of the borough is covered by Controlled Parking Zones (the exceptions being Cadogan Terrace and Fish Island). Within each of the CPZs, parking is prioritised for people with disabilities, residents, businesses and visitors.

In these circumstances, there is only limited scope for revising on-street parking arrangements to meet the competing needs of residents and businesses, while maintaining the free movement of traffic and promoting road safety.

Following a study in 2008 undertaken by consultants appointed by Transport for London, it was identified that New Road was subject to indiscriminate/illegal parking resulting in severe delays to the flow of traffic, not least London Bus services. Accordingly, a scheme was introduced to:

(a) provide better facilities for buses to pull in to the kerb, which assists passengers to enter/exit the bus safely and without difficulty; (b) provide Loading Only bays in certain locations and (c) prohibit waiting/loading at other sections of New Road.

The new scheme was brought in following full consultation with residents and local traders and has since been amended as a result of representations made by local traders. However, it is obvious that any scheme designed to improve the flow of traffic previously impeded by parked vehicles and allow buses to access the kerbside is likely to result in an overall loss of parking availability. This can only mean a rebalancing of the needs of residents, local businesses and their customers, which our officers have attempted to achieve through further consultation.

Whitechapel is a busy thoroughfare as well as the site of a thriving local market. Whitechapel Road is managed by Transport for London who have recently embarked on a new enforcement initiative. Again, this is intended to improve the flow of traffic and in particular reduce bus journey times.

The London Hospital attracts many car borne visitors and the local road network simply cannot accommodate such volumes. The extensive redevelopment of the site means that it will attract even more visitors in the future and does not include any additional off-street parking. It is therefore inevitable that while using a car might be the preferred method of travel to the hospital, more journeys will have to be made using public transport.

In order to assist the dropping off/picking up of passengers attending the London Hospital, a limited stay "free parking bay" was introduced last Autumn on Turner Street, by Stepney Way. The bay, which accommodates two vehicles, was introduced partially on previous yellow lines and partially on a previous Pay & Display bay. In order to encourage turnover and assist as many people as possible, it has a maximum stay of ten minutes with no return within forty minutes. The hours of the bay were initially operative during the basic zone times of 0830 and 1730, Monday to Friday, but in March this year increased to 24/7 to assist those attending Accident and Emergency.

The parking controls introduced by the Council will only deliver the desired benefits if motorists comply with the regulations. A degree of enforcement is required to achieve this and in some parts of the borough, a considerable degree is necessary.

Where it is possible to enforce by CCTV, it is generally recognised as the most effective method and best use of the Council's limited resources. Nevertheless, it has the disadvantage of not having the same visibility as patrols by Civil Enforcement Officers, which it could be argued deters the motorists from flouting the regulations or taking the risk of not being caught.

In order to improve motorists' awareness of the use of CCTV in the Borough and to improve compliance as a result, in December 2009 and January 2010 an additional 300 advisory signs were placed on lamp posts near or at the entry of the streets where the 44 CCTV cameras used for parking enforcement are located. Depending on the location, leaflets were also issued to motorists and shop keepers, drawing attention to the use of CCTV for parking enforcement. The Council also carried out a media campaign, encouraging motorists to consider other road users when parking and explaining how to avoid being given a parking ticket.

The Council has also carried out three trials to examine the relative effectiveness of CEO patrols and CCTV in deterring and detecting parking infringements. These trials concluded that in some areas and in relation to some types of infringement, the highly visible, real time problem solving and preventative benefits of targeted CEO deployment is a useful supplementary tool to CCTV. However, for reasons of cost and practicality, CEO patrols cannot provide a constant presence in any locality.

The three trial sites of Brick Lane, Turner Street and Roman Road, showed that the use of CEOs cannot match the use of CCTV in the detection of parking contraventions. Given that parking controls are primarily to protect residents' parking, business servicing, public safety and free flow of traffic where there is the greatest potential for conflicts to occur, the use of CCTV is an appropriate measure. During the pilot the substantial fall in the number of PCNs issued, where CCTV was suspended during patrol periods, shows a high level of parking infringements occur without detection or penalty. Ultimately, this means that the Council would not be effectively pursuing its parking policies and actively managing parking, for the benefit of the whole community, if it decided not to use CCTV.

PCNs are designed to have a deterrent effect on motorists and whilst their impact is not immediate, they do serve to prevent many motorists from re-infringing parking regulations. CCTV is likely to promote a reduction of infringements over time and experience shows that this is the case, but it is essential that its use is clearly communicated by displaying clear and highly visible signs.

The use of CCTV, coupled with clear and visible signage, provides the most cost effective and efficient option to reduce parking contraventions and fulfil the Council's responsibilities for road safety and the safety of pedestrians.



I had an on-site meeting with officers from Parking Services on 8 July to better understand the issues they have in enforcing the regulations either by patrols or CCTV and to express my views.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Shafiqul Haque:**

Thank you. You used to raise concerns on issuing tickets. What steps have you taken since you have taken on your new Lead Member role?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

If you go to the area now you will see that my predecessor, Councillor Abdal Ullah has taken on this concern and there are now two pick up and drop off points at the hospital where cars can stand for ten minutes whilst dropping off and picking up patients. CCTV is not an ideal scenario but it allows the attendants to keep a check on the area which parking attendants alone cannot.

You will be pleased to learn that we have decided to carry out a thorough consultation exercise that will most probably take place later in the year. This will enable us to obtain feedback from residents, businesses and all categories that make use of either parking permits or Pay and Display bays. I hope that with the information gathered, we can adopt policy that will become much more responsive to the parking demands of our borough.

**7.8 Question from Councillor Peter Golds to the Lead Member for Regeneration and Employment, Councillor Sirajul Islam**

“As only 62 Tower Hamlets residents secured jobs on the Olympic Site as a result of applications advertised in through borough's Job Brokerages Scheme, what steps are the Development and Renewal directorate taking to improve this?”

**Response of the Lead Member:**

Skillsmatch is the lead brokerage organisation for Tower Hamlets for handling vacancies connected to the Games and receives these from the Joint Coordination Team at Jobcentre Plus. It is responsible for the submission of Tower Hamlets residents who are capable of fulfilling the roles, and these are considered alongside applicants from other Host Boroughs.

The job outcomes for local residents through this network via Skillsmatch since its establishment in 2007 are: 2007/2008 – 41; 2008/2009 – 59; and 2009/2010 – 62 (these 62 during 2009/10 are in addition to a minimum of 100 throughout the two years before). I should point out that for 07/08 and 08/09 data protection guidelines at

the ODA prevented us from receiving comprehensive confirmation on numbers. However, from our own records the figures shown for those years can be used as a guideline for minimum numbers.

Thus the number of jobs on the Olympic Park through the brokerage to date is a minimum of 162.

Despite a number of barriers to employment on the Olympic Park – outlined below - we are working closely with the ODA and through the established referral network to improve forward knowledge of contractor future job requirements and thus hope that numbers will continue to grow over the next financial year.

It is important to note that there have been a number of fundamental restraints on our ability to place higher numbers of residents into Olympic related roles. Notably evidence suggests that due to the economic downturn and significant slow down in the development industry Olympic Park contractors are moving existing workforce from other sites to the Olympic Park (avoiding lay offs etc.) and this is having a consequential impact on recruitment of new workers onto the site, thus squeezing the number of roles available to local residents.

In addition to this, the expected demand for apprentices has been far lower than expected, with the ODA advising that the bulk of opportunities will become available later on this year. Discussions have already been had with colleagues in the 14-19 teams to ensure that the Council can respond to these opportunities and maximise results.

In seeking to maximise the opportunities for local residents from the Olympics the London Development Agency established with the Host Boroughs the Local Employment and Training Framework (LETf) fully funded by the LDA to train and support local Host Borough residents to develop skills in construction and security to support referrals for Olympic jobs. The programme (and funding) ran from June 2007 until March 2010 and in Tower Hamlets over 400 residents achieved a job through this programme, although not all of these have been on the Olympic Park (i.e. jobs on other sites e.g. Canary Wharf) were obtained. Over 1,000 residents received training through this programme.

The member will be pleased to learn that Skillsmatch is currently finalising a delivery plan for the Tower Hamlets element of a new Host Borough Employment and Skills investment programme funded by the LDA which will continue this and wider activities over the next three years.

Following this year's Big Build period it is likely that the nature of the vacancies will shift from construction more towards operational vacancies through LOCOG such as hospitality and catering as the event approaches. Although these are likely to be short term jobs Skillsmatch and the other 5 Boroughs are in dialogue with LOCOG

over how these short term opportunities might link to routeways into work for local residents in sectors such as hospitality, catering, security and retail.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Peter Golds:**

The Olympic site adjoins the borough but the figures are very small relative to levels of unemployment. What is the Lead Member going to do to make sure that young people and those with the appropriate skills get jobs?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

We are not the only borough as there are five host boroughs. I agree we have to maximise our opportunities as we have lots of young people in the borough. As Lead Member I am committed to that and to working with the partners to skill up young people to secure jobs.

**7.9 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs to the Lead Member for Culture and Creative Industries, Councillor Denise Jones**

“How many more young people, adults and over 60s have taken up swimming as a result of the free swimming initiative and what impact will the cancellation of funding by the coalition government have?”

**Response of the Lead Member:**

Free swimming was a Labour Government initiative. The number of free swim visits in 2009 under this scheme was 46,961. Of these 29,542 participants were under 16s and 17,419 over 60s. The health benefits of swimming are well documented and we know that on average older people in Tower Hamlets exercise less than older people in London and this programme has helped encourage them to do more. Swimming also provides an excellent diversion for young people who have made great use of this opportunity. For this reason we have decided to continue the programme until 31 October, despite the Coalition Government cutting the programme and we intend to fund this by cutting Councillors' special responsibility allowances and reducing catering arrangements at Council meetings. We will also continue to provide Free Swim Friday for Tower Hamlets residents and Family Swim Saturday. Free swimming for women is still, at this time, being funded through the Healthy Tower Hamlets allocation.

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs:**

This is another cut which will affect the poorer areas more. Free swimming provides young people with positive activities to address problems such as anti-social behaviour and obesity - how can we afford not to continue with it? Doesn't this show that the Conservatives know the cost of everything and the value of nothing?

**Summary of Lead Member's response:**

I could not have put that better myself.

**7.10 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Abdal Ullah**

"Given the recent incidents around the Blackwall and East India DLR station, including muggings reported in, what will the Lead Member be doing to reassure local residents and combat the problem?"

**Response of the Lead Member:**

There are a range of policing initiatives to deal with the problem and other problems across the borough.

The police ensure that their 'robbery task force' patrol all areas that are experiencing crime problems related to robbery. In addition the boroughs Safer Transport Team will be paying attention to the area along with the SNT and the Council funded joint enforcement team.

*No supplementary question was asked by Councillor Theinel.*

In accordance with Rule 12.10 (expiry of time limit), questions 11 – 32 were not put. Written responses would be forwarded to the questioners.

**8. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES****8.1 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Sirajul Islam **MOVED** and Councillor Stephanie Eaton **SECONDED** – "That the recommendations set out in the report be agreed."

Councillor Sirajul Islam addressed the meeting on the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2009/10. After discussion, the recommendations were put to the vote and were **AGREED**, with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:

**RESOLVED**

1. That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2009-10 be noted.
2. That the number of positions for Parent Governor representative co-optees to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be increased from two to three; and the Committee's terms of reference at Part 3.3.2 of the

Council's Constitution and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules at Part 4.5 of the Constitution be amended accordingly.

## **8.2 Members' Allowances Scheme: Changes to Special Responsibility Allowances (TABLED)**

The tabled report was considered as an urgent item with the agreement of the Mayor. The recommendations to the Council contained therein arose from a Cabinet meeting which took place after the publication of the Council agenda. A decision was required at the current meeting because no further Council meetings were scheduled before the proposed effective date of the changes recommended by the Cabinet (1<sup>st</sup> August 2010).

Councillor David Edgar **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** the recommendation as set out in the report.

Councillor David Snowdon under Rule 14.1, then **MOVED** and Councillor Tim Archer **SECONDED** an amendment to the recommendation – "That the Conservative Group notes the decision by the Cabinet as a first step in the right direction and the Council believes that all Members allowances and SRAs should be reduced by 5%."

After discussion, the amendment moved by Councillor Snowdon was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and was **agreed**, with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

### **RESOLVED**

That all Special Responsibility Allowances payable under the Members' Allowances Scheme to Members of this Authority be reduced by 5% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010.

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

There was no business to be considered under this heading.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 Petition Scheme**

An addendum report was tabled at the meeting, setting out a revised draft Petition Scheme incorporating comments raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet meetings.

Councillor Joshua Peck **MOVED** and Councillor Helal Abbas **SECONDED** the revised recommendations as set out in the addendum report.

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

### **RESOLVED**

1. That the duty to respond to petitions included in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and the consequent requirement on the Council to agree a Petition Scheme be noted; and
2. That the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet be noted and the draft petition scheme as set out at Appendix 'B' to the tabled addendum report be adopted.

## **10.2 Draft Statement of Accounts 2009-2010**

This report had been dealt with earlier in the agenda.

## **10.3 Appointment of Independent Members of the Standards Committee**

Councillor Helal Abbas **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** the recommendation as set out in the report.

The recommendation was put to the vote and was **agreed**, with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:

### **RESOLVED**

That the following persons be appointed as Independent Members of the Standards Committee, each to serve a three year term of office expiring on the date of the Annual Council meeting in May 2013, subject to annual confirmation by the Council:-

- Ms. Sue Rossiter (new appointment); and
- Mr. Patrick (Barry) O'Connor (re-appointment)

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

### **11.1 Motion proposed by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding youth offenders**

The motion as printed in the agenda was **MOVED** by Councillor Stephanie Eaton and **SECONDED** by Councillor Harun Miah.

Councillor Shiria Khatun then **MOVED**, and Councillor Sirajul Islam **SECONDED**, an **AMENDMENT** to the motion as follows:-

**“Under “This council notes” add**

“That this Labour Council’s Youth Offending Team (YOT) have made good progress in ensuring that 85% of the young offenders they have assisted in the last year are either in education training or employment at the end of their youth justice orders.”

“That the Tower Hamlets YOT has a series of successful partnerships with voluntary sector agencies as well as trainers that aim to place young people into training and work which lead to successful placements and positive outcomes for young offenders”

**Under “This Council resolves” add**

“To fully assess the cost implications before commissioning projects or developing new services for Young Offenders in light of the current financial circumstances.”

After discussion, the amendment moved by Councillor Shiria Khatun was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote and was **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

**RESOLVED**

This Council notes:

1. 60-80 young people come off criminal justice orders every quarter in Tower Hamlets, of which 30-40 young people are of school age.
2. That a reduction in re-offending is closely linked to successful settlement into work.
3. There are often difficulties placing young ex-offenders into work placements and other forms of employment or training as employers are cautious about employing ex-offenders, and the young people often require support in the workplace.
4. There is a tendency for employers to view the recruitment of young offenders as a corporate social responsibility when a solid business case could be developed to give employers confidence and justify employing young ex-offenders.
5. Many employers outsource roles which might be appropriate to young people leaving the criminal justice system, however, the outsourced companies have stringent screening processes which inhibit young offenders from recruitment.

6. KPMG and Freshfields have delivered successful employment programmes targeted at the homeless and these programmes may provide models for employment of young ex-offenders. Such programmes have been successful because both employers and employees are offered support such as an employer's helpline.

7. That opportunities provided for the small number of young ex-offenders in the Borough would benefit other young people through a reduction in victimisation; the development of positive role models; and the demonstration of the longer term benefits of work and training.

8. That this Labour Council's Youth Offending Team (YOT) have made good progress in ensuring that 85% of the young offenders they have assisted in the last year are either in education training or employment at the end of their youth justice orders.

9. That the Tower Hamlets YOT has a series of successful partnerships with voluntary sector agencies as well as trainers that aim to place young people into training and work which lead to successful placements and positive outcomes for young offenders.

This Council resolves:

1. To develop an effective training into work model which reduces the risk associated with employing young ex-offenders, and which can be used to support firms to employ young ex-offenders.

2. To ensure the Youth Justice Board is working with organisations such as Community Links and East Potential to ensure there is a smooth transition into employment and training after criminal justice orders are concluded.

3. To work with partners such as Community Links and East Potential to develop a training programme for motivated ex-offenders who wish to become self-employed.

4. To investigate the potential for employment opportunities for young ex-offenders among the Council's larger contractors e.g. Veolia, and larger employers in the borough e.g. Tesco to discuss with them their attitude to employment of ex-offenders.

5. That the East London Business Alliance undertakes a project to investigate the business case, costs and opportunities for employing young ex-offenders based on their potential contribution to a company.



6. To fully assess the cost implications before commissioning projects or developing new services for Young Offenders in light of the current financial circumstances.

The meeting ended at 9.28 p.m.

Mayor