

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 22 MARCH 2017

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

During the meeting the Council agreed to vary the order of business. To aid clarity, the Decision Sheet is presented in the order that the items originally appeared on the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Mayor John Biggs
- Councillor M. Abdul Mukit
- Councillor Amina Ali
- Councillor Joshua Peck
- Councillor Gulam Robbani
- Councillor Abdul Asad
- Councillor Julia Dockerill
- Councillor Craig Aston

Apologies for lateness was received on behalf of Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests were made.

Councillor Helal Uddin declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12.6 Motion regarding Poplar HARCA Auction of 50 Social Dwellings as his employers had a working relationship with Poplar HARCA

Councillor Denise Jones declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8.3, Members Question regarding business rates, as she had a small business.

3. MINUTES

DECISION:

1. That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Wednesday 18 January 2017 be agreed as a correct record of proceedings.
2. That the minutes of the Budget Council meeting held on Wednesday 22 February 2017 be agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

3. That the supplementary note (attached as Appendix A) be agreed as an addition to the minutes of and a variation to the decision of the Budget Council meeting of Wednesday 22 February 2017

(**Action by:** Matthew Mannion, Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services)

4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Please see the minutes.

5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

5.1 Petition relating to Compensation for no heating and hot water in Killick Way, Ocean Estate Tower Hamlets

Sofijur Rahman addressed the meeting and responded to questions from Members. Councillor Sirajul Islam, Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management & Performance, then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION:

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Place for a written response within 28 days.

(**Action by:** Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director Place).

5.2 Petition relating to Tower Hamlets Nursery Schools

Chris Lewis, Becky Dolomore, and Bridget Cass addressed the meeting and responded to questions from Members. Councillor Rachael Saunders, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION:

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Children's, for a written response within 28 days.

(**Action by:** Debbie Jones Corporate Director, Children's)

5.3 Petition relating to Construction/building work in Aston Street E14

Adm Azim Khan Chowdhury addressed the meeting and responded to questions from Members. Councillor Rachel Blake, Cabinet Member for Strategic Development, then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION:

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Place for a written response within 28 days.

(Action by: Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director Place).

5.4 Petition Debate – Save our Nurseries from Privatisation.

The Council agreed to suspend standing orders to allow for this petition to be heard. The text of the petition and the procedure for considering petitions for debate were circulated at the meeting.

Nouruja Rahman, Shahanara Zaman, and Alicja Son addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and the Council then debated the matters raised by the petition. Councillor Rachael Saunders, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services responded to the issues raised.

DECISION:

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Children's, for a written response within 28 days.

(Action by: Debbie Jones Corporate Director, Children's)

6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The following question followed by a supplementary question was put and was responded to by the relevant Executive Member:-

- 6.1 Question from Abu Talha Chowdhury about local authority intervention in schools.

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Councillor Sirajul Islam, Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management & Performance, presented the report to the Council on behalf of Mayor John Biggs. The Leaders of the respective political groups then responded briefly to the report.

8. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

The following questions and in each case supplementary questions were put (except where indicated) and were responded to by the Mayor, relevant Executive Member or Councillor:-

- 8.1 Question from Councillor Sabina Akhtar about school funding.
- 8.2 Question from Councillor Oliur Rahman about the provision of support for Syrian refugee children
- 8.3 Question from Councillor Denise Jones about the business rate increase. (No supplementary question was asked)
- 8.4 Question from Councillor Andrew Wood about the closure of Marsh Wall & Eastferry Road and the Council's response to this.
- 8.6 Question from Councillor Rabina Khan about the Project Stone regeneration scheme and the quality of the new properties.
- 8.7 Question from Councillor Danny Hassell about safety along Cantrell Road and the work being undertaken to improve safety.
- 8.8 Question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed about local crime statistics.
- 8.9 Question from Councillor Candida Ronald about the impact of the Government's budget.
- 8.10 Question from Councillor Chris Chapman about the effectiveness of the 20mph limit.
- 8.11 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin about the food poverty action plan. (No supplementary question was asked)

Question 8.5 was not put due to the absence of the questioner. Questions 8.12 - 28 were not put due to lack of time. Written responses would be provided to the questions.

(Action by:- Matthew Mannion, Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services to arrange written response)

9. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**9.1 Report of the General Purposes Committee: Localism Act 2011 - Pay Policy Statement 2017/18**

The Council considered the report of the General Purposes Committee recommending Full Council adopt the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18.

Following debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and were unanimously **agreed**.

DECISION:

1. That the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 be agreed.

(**Action by:** Zena Cooke, Corporate Director, Resources)

9.2 Report of the General Purposes Committee: Revision of the Council' Constitution - Parts 1 to 3

The Council considered the report of the General Purposes Committee proposing revisions to Parts 1 to 3 of the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Oliur Rahman tabled comments from the Independent Group on the draft changes, it was agreed with the Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer that the paper would be considered when the Constitution Working Party next met.

Following debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and were unanimously **agreed**.

DECISION:

1. That the spreadsheet in Appendix 1 of the report setting out the revisions and the reasons be noted;
2. That the revised Part 1 Summary and Explanation of the Constitution in Appendix 2 with the revisions shown as tracked changes be approved;
3. That the revised Part 2 Articles of the Tower Hamlets Constitution in Appendix 3 with the revisions shown as tracked changes be approved; and
4. That the revised Part 3 Responsibility for Functions of the Tower Hamlets Constitution in Appendix 4 to 12 with the revisions shown as tracked changes be approved.

(**Action by:** Graham White, Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer)

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

There was no business to transact under this agenda item.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Members' Allowance Scheme

The Council considered the report of the Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer proposing the adoption of the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2017/18.

Following debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and were **agreed**.

DECISION:

1. That the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members' Allowances Scheme 2017 be adopted as set out at Appendix 'A' to the report

(**Action by:** Graham White, Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer)

11.2 Committee Calendar 2017/18

The Council considered the report of the Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer proposing a Committee Calendar for 2017/18.

A proposed minor amendment to the calendar was noted as set out in resolution 1 below.

The recommendations were put to the vote and were **agreed**.

DECISION:

1. That the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2017/18 be approved as set out in Appendix A to the report subject to the following changes:
 - The Pensions Committee meeting on 29th November be moved to 20th November 2017 at 7pm
 - The Pensions Board meeting on 27th November be moved to 20th November 2017 at 10am
 - The Employee Appeals Sub Committee meeting on 20th November be moved to 29th November 2017 at 6.30pm

2. That the Corporate Director for Governance be delegated the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.

(**Action by:** Graham White, Acting Corporate Director, Governance and Interim Monitoring Officer)

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

12.7 Motion regarding School Funding

Councillor Rachael Saunders **moved** and Councillor Danny Hassell **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Rachael Saunders proposed the following amendment to the motion in respect of sentences 3, 4, and 5 under 'This Council notes that':

3. Delete '£18.8m by 2018/19', a 7.6% cut and replace with ' £32.5m by 2020 – the equivalent of 873 teachers, according to analysis by the NUT'
4. Delete '£511 per pupil by 2018/19' and replace with '£905 per pupil by 2020'.
5. Delete '£360m by 2018/19' and replace with '£657m' and delete '12,857' and replace with '17,638' and add (NUT analysis) to the end of the sentence.

Councillor Rachael Saunders and Councillor Danny Hassell altered their motion accordingly:

Councillor Oliur Rahman **moved** and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **seconded** a friendly amendment to the motion as set out below:

Under This Council believes, add the following:

This Government proposal puts at risk the great strides made in Tower Hamlets by successive administrations. For example, an independent report in December 2013 "Transforming Education for All : the Tower Hamlets Story" concluded that Tower Hamlets has some of the best urban schools in the world.

Under Council Resolves, add the following (bold emphasis part) in point 1

To call on Mayor Biggs to write '**on a cross-party basis**' to the Department for Education.....

Councillor Rachael Saunders and Councillor Danny Hassell indicated that they accepted the amendment and altered their motion accordingly.

Following further debate, the motion as amended was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

DECISION:

This Council notes that:

1. Tower Hamlets is a place of huge diversity, and deprivation, and over the last 20 years families, schools, young people and the Council have come together to drive up standards through collaboration and through a determination to achieve excellence – backed by a Labour government which funded us appropriately. This is now at risk from Tory cuts.
2. The Government has proposed a new school funding formula, which will take money from poorer areas and reallocate it to wealthier areas.
3. The impact of the changes, included with other cost pressures, mean that schools in Tower Hamlets will have to save ‘ £32.5m by 2020 – the equivalent of 873 teachers, according to analysis by the NUT
4. Schools in Tower Hamlets will lose £905 per pupil by 2020, making the borough the hardest hit in London.
5. Cumulatively schools across London will need to save £657M under the new system – equivalent to 17,638 qualified teachers (NUT analysis).
6. The Government’s Budget 2017 included £360m for new free schools and grammar schools, but ignored the financial crisis that our existing schools face.

This Council believes:

1. The new funding formula won’t bring about fairer school funding across the country. Instead, it will further cut funding from schools already struggling with education cuts.
2. The new formula will put the progress made by our schools in jeopardy by punishing pupils from the poorest areas and harming social mobility.
3. That schools in Tower Hamlets deserve to be fairly and properly funded.
4. This Government proposal puts at risk the great strides made in Tower Hamlets by successive administrations. For example, an independent report in December 2013 “Transforming Education for All : the Tower Hamlets Story” concluded that Tower Hamlets has some of the best urban schools in the world.

This Council resolves:

1. To call on Mayor Biggs to write on a cross-party basis to the Department for Education, highlighting the threat to progress that the school funding changes represent.
2. To support the Mayor's campaign to challenge these unfair and deeply damaging cuts to schools in Tower Hamlets.

(Action by: Debbie Jones Corporate Director, Children's)

Motions 12.1 – 12.6 and 12.8 - 9 were not debated due to lack of time.

The meeting ended at 10.12 p.m.