

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2008

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

Members Present:

Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan
Councillor Rajib Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Anwara Ali	Councillor Abdul Matin
Councillor M. Shahid Ali	Councillor Abjol Miah
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Lutfa Begum	Councillor Abdul Munim
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 M. Mamun Rashid
Councillor Peter Golds	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 Shirley Houghton	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Ahmed Hussain	Councillor Dulal Uddin
Councillor Waiseul Islam	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Ann Jackson	Councillor Salim Ullah
Councillor Denise Jones	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Dr. Emma Jones	

The meeting opened at 7.34 p.m.

The Mayor, Councillor Muhammad Abdullah Salique, in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Ohid Ahmed, Shahed Ali, Fazlul Haque, Alex Heslop, Sirajul Islam and Oliur Rahman.

RESOLVED

That the apologies for absence 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
Helal Abbas	5.2.2	Personal	Ward member of Spitalfields & Banglatown
Helal Abbas	11.1	Personal	Permit holder
Helal Abbas	11.3	Personal	Works within the organisation of Poverty Campaign
Helal Abbas	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Helal Abbas	11.6	Personal	Employer involved
Helal Abbas	11.8	Personal	Member of a Co-operative
Rajib Ahmed	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Rajib Ahmed	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Rofique Ahmed U.	11.1	Personal	Holds Council issued parking permit for estate parking
Rofique Ahmed U.	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder and paying a mortgage
Rofique Ahmed U.	11.7	Personal	Board Member of ODA Planning Committee
Mohammed Shahid Ali	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Abdul Asad	11.8	Personal	Member of Co-operative Party
Lutfu Begum	7.8	Personal	Employed by NHS
Lutfu Begum	7.10	Personal	Employed by NHS
Stephanie Eaton	5.2.3 and 5.2.4	Personal	Petition relates to a premises in the Councillor's ward which

			she visited during Ramadan.
Carli Harper-Penman	11.8	Personal	Member of Co-operative Party
Shafiqul Haque	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Shafiqul Haque	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Ahmed Hussain	7.8	Personal	Employed by PCT
Ahmed Hussain	7.10	Personal	Employed by PCT
Waiseul Islam	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Waiseul Islam	11.4	Personal	Mortgaged property owner
Ann Jackson	11.3	Personal	Member of an affiliated organisation (Oxfam)
Ann Jackson	11.4	Personal	I have a mortgaged property in the borough
Ann Jackson	11.6	Personal	Union Member
Denise Jones	7.2	Personal	Board Member of Tower Hamlets Homes
Denise Jones	7.8	Personal	Non executive member of THPCT
Denise Jones	7.19	Personal	Board member of Tower Hamlets Homes and End End Homes
Azizur R. Khan	5.2.3 and 5.2.4	Personal	Petition relates to a premises in the Councillor's ward which he visited during Ramadan.
Azizur R. Khan	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Rania Khan	5.2.1	Personal	Ward Councillor
Rania Khan	8.1	Personal	Has campaigned against strip clubs

Rania Khan	11.6	Personal	Has campaigned for Living Wage
Abjol Miah	5.2.3 and 5.2.4	Personal	Referee for one of the organisations presenting a petition
Fozol Miah	5.2.2	Personal	Ward Councillor
Harun Miah	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Abdul Munim	5.2	Personal	Ward Councillor
Joshua Peck	11.7	Personal	Employee of a company that has a contract with LOCOG and the ODA
Lutfur Rahman	5.2.2	Personal	Ward Councillor
Lutfur Rahman	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Lutfur Rahman	11.4	Personal	Mortgaged property
Lutfur Rahman	11.7	Personal	Member of Olympic 5 Borough Committee
Muhammad Abdullah Salique	5.2.3 and 5.2.4	Personal	Ward Councillor, Bethnal Green North
Muhammad Abdullah Salique	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Muhammad Abdullah Salique	11.4	Personal	Home owner
A. A. Sardar	5.2.1	Personal	Ward Councillor
A. A. Sardar	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
A. A. Sardar	11.5	Personal	Eligible for Winter Fuel Allowance
Rachael Saunders	8.1	Personal	Involvement in campaigns to reclassify strip clubs as Sex Encounter Establishments

Rachael Saunders	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Rachael Saunders	11.6	Personal	Employed by UNISON, who have campaigned for a London Living Wage
Bill Turner	8.1	Personal	Appeared in TV programme designed to advance campaign for regulation of strip clubs
Bill Turner	11.3	Personal	Member of two organisations affiliated to the End Child Poverty Campaign
Bill Turner	11.6	Personal	Attended meeting in support of Living Wage
Bill Turner	11.8	Personal	Member of the Co-operative Party
Bill Turner	11.12	Personal	Deal with the Met. Police on a professional basis
Abdal Ullah	5.2.2	Personal	Ward member of St. Dunstan's and Stepney Green
Abdal Ullah	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Abdal Ullah	11.5	Personal	Father eligible for Winter Fuel Allowance
Salim Ullah	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Motin Uz-Zaman	11.1	Personal	Holder of Council issued parking permit
Motin Uz-Zaman	11.4	Personal	Leaseholder
Motin Uz-Zaman	11.5	Personal	Mother eligible for winter fuel allowance

3. MINUTES**RESOLVED**

That subject to correction of the spelling of Councillor Clair Hawkins' name at minute 4 (iii), the minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2008 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**(i) Cllr Rachael Saunders**

Councillor Lutfur Rahman, Leader of the Council, welcomed Councillor Rachael Saunders to her first Council meeting since she was elected in a by-election as a Councillor for Mile End East ward.

(ii) Women Councillors of the Future Programme

The Mayor was pleased to welcome to the meeting a group of aspiring members from the Women Councillors of the Future programme. He expressed the hope that they would find the meeting interesting and enjoyable and would return to the Chamber in the future.

(iii) Lead Member, Children's Services

Councillor Clair Hawkins, Lead Member, Children's Services, addressed the Council concerning the tragic death in a neighbouring borough of a child (Child 'H') who had for a short period been resident in Tower Hamlets.

On behalf of all Members, Councillor Hawkins shared Redbridge Council's deep sense of sadness and regret about Child H's death and extended her heartfelt sympathy to the child's family and friends. Child H had spent most of her tragically short life outside of Tower Hamlets and the Serious Case Review undertaken by the Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board had made only one recommendation about this borough and had stated that it did not require immediate attention. However, the Council is always deeply concerned if any service becomes involved, directly or indirectly, in such a tragic case and had therefore implemented the recommendation willingly, fully and immediately.

Councillor Stephanie Eaton and Councillor Peter Golds addressed the meeting in turn. They each echoed Councillor Hawkins' shock and sadness at the case and expressed concern at some shortcomings described in the Serious Case Review; but welcomed the measures that had been taken and briefing that the group leaders had received on the matter.

Councillor Lutfur Rahman, Leader of the Council also expressed his sympathy and horror at the death of Child H. He agreed that any delays to the assessment process were of concern and welcomed the speedy implementation of the Board's recommendation and response of the Council's Children's Services department in this regard.

5. TO RECEIVE ANY DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS

DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations at this meeting.

PETITIONS

Councillor Lutfur Rahman, Leader of the Council, **MOVED** and Councillor Stephanie Eaton **SECONDED** - "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.4, the Council agree to suspend Rule 19.1 to enable an additional petition on 73 Bishops Way to be heard."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**. The additional petition was taken at item 5.2.4.

5.2.1 Petition re: Land south of Rainhill Way

At the invitation of the Mayor, Ms. Clare O'Riordan addressed the meeting in support of the petition concerning land south of Rainhill Way. She re-iterated the points raised in the written petition and asked when the land would be returned to its previous condition before the planning breach was made.

Ms. O'Riordan responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Marc Francis, Lead Member for Housing and Development responded to the matters raised in Ms. O'Riordan's petition. As part of the regeneration of the estate, Swan Housing Association would be converting the site into usable open space for the benefit of the community. Councillor Francis had been assured by senior officers at Swan Housing that there was no intention on the Housing Association's part to avoid its obligations. However in view of the points raised in the petition, Councillor Francis undertook to contact the petitioners and arrange to visit the site.

RESOLVED

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

5.2.2 Petition re: Crossrail

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Muhammed Haque addressed the meeting in support of the petition from the Khoodeelaar! Campaign regarding Crossrail. He re-iterated the points raised in the written petition.

Mr. Haque responded to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Marc Francis, the Lead Member for Housing and Development, responded to matters raised in the petition. Tower Hamlets had played an active role in the scrutiny of the Crossrail Act which became law on 22 July 2008, and had kept the local community informed of developments throughout. The Council had consistently supported the principle of Crossrail because of the economic and transport benefits it would bring to the borough but this support was always subject to the construction of stations at the Isle of Dogs and Whitechapel, and to minimising the environmental and any other adverse impacts of the construction work. Councillor Francis outlined a number of the significant achievements in this regard including Crossrail's review of its tunnelling strategy.

RESOLVED

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

5.2.3 Petition re: 73 Bishops Way, E2

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Shanur Miah addressed the meeting in support of the petition from the London Muslim Heritage Centre regarding 73 Bishops Way, E2.

Mr. Miah responded to questions by Members of the Council.

It was **AGREED** that the additional petition 5.2.4 would be heard before the Lead Member replied.

5.2.4 Petition re: 73 Bishops Way, E2

At the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Mohammed Shah addressed the meeting in support of the petition from Bethnal Green North Community Focus regarding 73 Bishops Way, E2.

Mr. Shah responded to questions raised by Members of the Council.

Councillor Joshua Peck, Lead Member for Resources and Performance, responded to the matters raised in both petitions regarding 73 Bishops Way. Councillor Peck thanked each of the organisations for their petition and commented on the valuable work that they had outlined for the benefit of the community. The Council was currently exploring options for the future use of

the building in question and a report would come to the Cabinet for a decision at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED

That the petitions 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 each be referred to the Corporate Director Development & Renewal for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

6.1 Question from Ms. Johanna Kaschke to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

“When I recently enquired about funding I was told that the Council does not support Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. I believe that Neighbourhood Watch Schemes provide an essential communications tool between the community and the Police and help both sides to work toward a reduction in crime. Not even 17 extra Police officers can function efficiently without the co-operation of residents, where Neighbourhood Watch Schemes play a necessary role to further relations with the Police. Why doesn't the Council support Neighbourhood Watch Schemes?”

Response of the Lead Member:

The Partnership Serious Acquisitive Crime sub group has supported and funded the launch of the new Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators group at Oxford House on 13 November. Tower Hamlets Police and the Local Authority see Neighbourhood Watches as a crucial element in preventing crime and engaging local communities. Safer Neighbourhood Teams will be looking to increase the current 40 Watches in the New Year and this will include promoting them in the media as well as erecting local signs in Watch areas.

Summary of supplementary question from Ms. Kaschke:

I was present at the launch on 25th November where the Metropolitan Police and the Deputy Mayor of London supported Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. The decline in schemes is due to lack of funding. What will the Council do to actually provide funds to support Neighbourhood Watch Schemes?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

I was also at the launch. It is not just a question of funding it also about working with partners in the LAPs and effective communication. I hope that you will wish to play a role in this and I invite you to participate and champion the scheme.

At this point (9.01 pm), the meeting was adjourned to enable a number of members of the public to leave the gallery.

The meeting resumed at 9.12 pm and the Service Head, Democratic Services informed Members that the revised projected end time for the meeting was now 10.45 pm.

Urgent Motion – Woolworths (tabled)

Councillor Abjol Miah **MOVED** and Councillor Dulal Uddin **SECONDED** “That under Procedural rule 14.1.4, rule 13.1 be suspended to enable the following urgent motion on Woolworths to be considered at the meeting:-

This Council notes:

- a) The imminent closure of Woolworths with the loss of 30,000 jobs, the biggest single loss of jobs so far in the credit crunch, and the loss of 815 high street stores supplying cheap and useful goods to people on low incomes;
- b) That Woolworths has been made bankrupt by the credit crunch which saw banks refusing to roll over loans and insurers refusing to insure Woolworths debts;
- c) That there are three Woolworths stores in Tower Hamlets, one in the Bethnal Green Road, one in Roman Road and one in Vesey Path near Crisp Street, Poplar;
- d) That the closure of Woolworths stores in Tower Hamlets will not only put more than 100 people out of work probably before Christmas but that it will also have an adverse effect on other shops and on market stalls in the Bethnal Green Road, Roman Road and Crisp Street areas;
- e) That the closure of Woolworths in the Roman Road is a particularly severe blow for this area which has already suffered the loss of the Safeways supermarket;
- f) That the Government has moved with extraordinary alacrity to bail out the banks but has remained absolutely motionless with regard to Woolworths which provides real jobs providing a real service;
- g) That Woolworths is on sale for just £1;
- h) That George Galloway, MP for Bethnal Green and Bow has raised a petition which is now posted on the No. 10 website and an Early Day Motion 250 calling on the Government to save Woolworths and turn it into a People’s Woolies;
- i) That George Galloway has asked for an urgent meeting with Business Secretary Lord Mandelson to demand that Woolworths be added to the list of

companies Lord Mandelson has drawn up to save in the face of the worsening recession.

This Council supports all the initiatives that are being taken to demand the Government take action to save Woolies.

This Council believes the Leader of the Council should also seek an urgent meeting with the Business Secretary to urge Government intervention to save Woolworths.

This Council calls on the Government to intervene as a matter of urgency to save Woolworths, the 815 high street stores and 30,000 jobs.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

Councillor Abjol Miah then **MOVED** and Councillor Dulal Uddin **SECONDED**, “That under Procedural Rule 14.1.3, the order of business be varied to enable the urgent motion in respect of Woolworths to be discussed as the next item of business.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **defeated**. The motion on Woolworths was therefore placed as motion 11.13 on the agenda.

7. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Tim Archer **MOVED** and Councillor Peter Golds **SECONDED** “That Procedural Rule 12.3 be suspended to enable the following urgent question which is a matter of public policy involving the Council to be put to the Lead Member for Housing and Development:-

Peter Marsh, the Chief Executive of the Tenant Services Authority, the housing association regulator, has disclosed to Parliament and reported in the Guardian today that six medium to large housing associations were now in serious financial difficulty. Would the Lead Member please inform the Council if any of the Housing Associations in this borough are affected?”

The procedural motion was put to the meeting and was **agreed**.

Councillor Tim Archer further **MOVED** and Councillor Peter Golds **SECONDED** “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to enable the urgent question regarding Housing Associations to be asked as the first question.”

The procedural motion was put to the meeting was **defeated**. The additional question was therefore placed at item 7.28 on the agenda. The Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis, stated that he would be happy to provide a written response to the question following the meeting.

7.1 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

What measures is the Lead Member taking to deal with anti-social behaviour in Mile End East ward?

Response of the Lead Member:

A Reduction of ASB is a key priority for police Safer Neighbourhood teams working in partnership with Borough council teams.

The current Public Set Priorities are;

Eric Street Estate - ASB and drugs. The police have now completed their baseline survey and have started work, concentrating around Eric St, Hamlets Way and Mossford Street. Gangs of youths are the main concern along with drug dealing in and around the area. A drug warrant has recently been executed at a local address.

Leopold Est - ASB, drugs. This has been running for about 6 months and is due for a review.

Adopt a block system is in place.

The e3 night club is situated at the corner of Burdett Road and Bow Road. It was historically a major source of excessive noise nuisance and attracted a considerable amount of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the surrounding area late at night and in the early hours at weekends. The area is covered by CCTV cameras. Recently the cameras were instrumental in ensuring the closure of this night club. Following the closure of the club a resident's satisfaction survey was carried out to assess the response of residents to the levels of ASB in the ward. The overwhelming response from residents to this survey was that the ASB has significantly reduced in the area. The cameras are also used to monitor the activity of groups of youths that congregate in Mile End Park by the bridge over Mile End Road. Mile End East Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) is contacted if there are any incidents of ASB. Community Safety Services work in close partnership with the SNT and the ASB Investigation Officer is co-located with them in Bow police station. This arrangement provides an effective local service for dealing with emerging trends in ASB in the ward.

Summary of oral supplementary question from Councillor Rachael Saunders:

I am grateful for the Lead Member's answer and proud of the progress made on Safer Neighbourhood Teams and 17 new Police officers. Can the Lead Member say more about how the Council will empower local people to deal with the challenge on anti-social behaviour?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

There will in fact be 19 new Police officers and in addition, the THEO's will also deal with low level incidents. Tower Hamlets has a no nonsense approach to anti-social behaviour. I would also draw your attention to the Community Safety Awards which are taking place on 27th January 2009.

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

Will the Lead Member outline the recruitment strategy and approach to recruiting senior officers for the Tower Hamlets ALMO - Tower Hamlets Homes?

Response of the Lead Member:

Responsibility for recruitment to senior posts within Tower Hamlets Homes rests with the THH Board and decisions regarding the strategy and approach, and indeed the appointments, were made by the Board.

The Board chose to be supported throughout the process by the Joint Director of Human Resources (LBTH and THPCT), who advised on relevant issues and participated fully in the processes.

A search and selection consultancy from the Council's Approved List was appointed to assist, following a short competitive exercise.

5 appointments were made, the Chief Executive and 4 Directors.

The Chief Executive was appointed first so that the new appointee could then participate in the process of appointing their management team.

All 4 Director posts were recruited to on the same timescale and appointments were made over two days on 10th and 11th November 2008.

The process for all appointments included an external advertisement and executive search.

A long list of candidates was drawn up for each post; each long listed candidate was then interviewed and tested against technical criteria.

Following this process a shortlist was agreed by the members of the Board delegated to do so.

Short listed candidates gave a presentation to and were interviewed by panels made up of THH Board members, advised as set out above.

Summary of oral supplementary question from Councillor Archer:

Given that the new Director of Strategy and two Board members worked for Hackney Homes, a failing one star Housing Association, what assurances can the Lead Member give that Tower Hamlets will not also suffer losses and poor management?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

I am disappointed that members opposite are smearing an officer before he has even started the job. However, I am not surprised as even before I gave my answer, they have circulated a leaflet to constituents making allegations about the officer's appointment. The most outrageous aspect of all this, is that they themselves were offered the opportunity to take a position on the Board of Tower Hamlets Homes and thereby a role in this recruitment process.

For the record, let me make it clear that the appointment was purely on merit and merit alone. The officer brings enormous experience to the role of Director of Strategy – experience gained from more than ten years working on housing issues in Hackney and across London. As with the other members of the Senior Management Team of THH, we have full confidence in the appointment.

7.3 Question from Councillor Abjol Miah to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Would the Leader of the Council agree that it is a scandal that the Games Plan, a 250 page report on the likely economic and sporting effects of the Olympics commissioned by the government and produced and signed off by Tony Blair in 2002, has remained largely secret until now, that its assessment that there would be no economic or sporting benefits from the Olympics is very worrying, that the fact that £550 million of lottery money which would have gone to grassroots sport has been siphoned off to pay for the two week Olympic event is a matter of grave concern as this is now adversely affecting grassroots sport in Tower Hamlets and would he seek an urgent meeting with Tessa Jowell, the Olympics Minister, about these matters, following up a series of meetings that George Galloway has arranged with her and her office?

Response of the Leader of the Council

The report you cite, it states that:

“By staging the games in this part of the city the most enduring legacy of the Olympics will be the regeneration of an entire community for the direct benefit of everyone who lives there.”

To me this does not read as an admission that there will be no positive outcomes from the Olympics.

In a time of increasing economic uncertainty, the Olympics is providing jobs and training for our residents – especially in areas like construction, which are hardest hit by the recession. Cllr Alibor Choudhury can fill you in on some of the excellent work being done.

I am personally meeting with the leaders of the other four Olympic boroughs on a regular basis – the last meeting was less than two weeks ago – to help secure the Olympic legacy through a Multi Area Agreement which is allowing us to use Olympic money and Olympic opportunities to challenge housing, public realm and worklessness issues together.

To give just one example, the Thames Gateway Development Corporation has committed £9m to the High Street 2012 regeneration project and Design for London a further £4.5 million for public realm improvements and other interventions.

As for the accusation that money is being siphoned away from sports in the borough, I would invite you to read our plan for increasing young people's participation in sport, which includes provision for:

- more and better borough-wide competitive events with an Olympic theme
- girls and women only swimming sessions
- Training staff to equip them to meet the needs of disabled young people
- creating one or more borough-wide annual disabled sports day

Or better still, I would invite you to look at the £3.3 million we are investing in rebuilding the popular but dilapidated Osmani Youth Centre and our bid for millions in lottery cash to turn the Haileybury Youth Centre into a world class facility with sports, education and outreach programmes to benefit the entire community.

Summary of oral supplementary question from Councillor Abjol Miah:

Can the Leader provide us with the evidence of the legacy and in relation to housing what percentage of the properties from the Olympics this borough will receive and what will be given to other boroughs and what assurances can he give that the borough will not receive “the crumbs”?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

By definition the legacy will come after the Games. I am fully committed to obtaining the maximum benefits for this borough in housing, jobs and public realm, across the three themes of the multi-agency agreement entered into by the 5 boroughs with the Government.

7.4 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

Could the Lead Member comment on the recent increase in the number of people in the Borough stopped and searched under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) which are permitted only where an officer believes that serious violence may take place or that persons are carrying dangerous instruments or offensive weapons without good reason?

Response of the Lead Member

The use of this power is only granted by officers of the rank of Superintendent or above, or as a result of urgent operational need by an Inspector – All cases are based on intelligence that give grounds for an authority.

Operation Blunt (knife crime) has been the main driver in the use of stop and search to remove knives from the streets, and to arrest offenders.

The high number of young people being murdered in London as a result of knife crime demanded an appropriate response.

The Metropolitan Police introduced a rapid response task force in the summer. This team can be called upon by boroughs across London to tackle youth violence and use stop and search as a tactic. The team have worked in this borough.

So far this year, youth violence is currently down by 20% and knife crime is down by 12% in Tower Hamlets.

Summary of oral supplementary question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton:

Asian people are three times more likely to be stopped and searched in this borough than white people. Yet in 90% of cases no action is taken. Does the Lead Member think that this is proportionate?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

I have personally chaired a Task Group and I am aware that intelligence lead policing has prevented deaths. Searches must always be carried out in a professional, courteous and dignified manner and I believe this has been the case.

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

How many people have taken advantage of the telecare scheme since charges for use were abolished in September 2008?

Response by the Lead Member

In the first two months since the free service was introduced on 1 October 2008 (October – November), 211 telecare installations were completed. This compares to a total of 198 installations in the previous six months.

No supplementary question was asked.

7.6 Question from Councillor David Snowdon to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Joshua Peck

Could the Lead Member please outline what steps are taken to ensure that pay rates agreed with contractors and temporary staff through individual negotiations – as per his written answer to my question at the last Council meeting – represent good value for money?

Response of the Lead Member

The steps which have been taken to ensure value for money in respect of temporary staff engaged through agencies have been:

- A corporate contract for a managed service was established in 2006. Under this contract, all assignments are processed through the service provider, who manages the supply chain of staffing agencies.
- On establishment of the contract, the service provider immediately decreased the charge rate by a minimum of 2% across the board on existing assignments.
- At the start of the contract, and on an ongoing basis since then, the service provider has run agreed pay rates for specified posts, which is based on a comparison of every pay rate with other London Borough rates to ensure that they are sufficiently attractive to candidates, and also offer value for money for the Council.
- The pay rates for defined roles are usually based on the permanent equivalent salary.
- There are some specialist roles for which it is not possible to use established posts as a reference point, and in these cases, the hourly or daily payment must be based upon a rate agreed between the relevant manager and the candidate concerned.
- Corporate Management Team monitors expenditure on temporary staff on a quarterly basis, and Corporate Directors are responsible for reducing the numbers of temps in their Directorates. This typically involves scrutiny at Directorate Management Teams.

Summary of oral supplementary question from Councillor David Snowdon:

Does the Lead Member consider that the information about hourly rates paid to agency staff contained in a letter that I have received from the

Joint Director of Human Resources, showing rates of up to £130 per hour equivalent over £211,000 per annum, represent good value?

Summary of Lead Member's response:

Without the full details, I cannot comment on individual cases but these are not normal rates of pay. The Council have a target to reduce the number of agency staff used and I would be happy to look into the figures mentioned if provided with a copy of the letter.

In accordance with Rule 12.10 (expiry of time limit), questions 7.7 to 7.28 were not put. Written responses would be forwarded to the questioners.

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

8.1 Report of the Cabinet of 5th November 2008 - Response to Scrutiny Review on the Licensing of Strip Clubs

The meeting considered the report of the Cabinet meeting on 5th November 2008 in relation to the above item.

Councillor Abdal Ullah **MOVED** and Councillor Abdul Asad **SECONDED** the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor Abdal Ullah, Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener introduced the report. He welcomed the valuable contribution that the Scrutiny Working Group members had made and considered that this was an example of effective joint working.

Councillor Rania Khan addressed the meeting on the work that the Scrutiny Working Group had undertaken. She welcomed the change in the law which she considered had come about as a result of pressure from local communities and authorities such as Tower Hamlets.

Other Members commented on the report and welcomed the information and action plan set out therein.

After discussion, the recommendations were put to the meeting and were **agreed**. Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

That the Council notes the report of the Scrutiny Working Group on the Licensing of Strip Clubs and the action plan approved by the Cabinet on 5th November 2008.

9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

9.1 Joint Arrangements

There was no business under this heading to be considered.

9.2 External Organisations

There was no business under this heading to be considered.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Review of proportionality and allocation of places on committees and panels of the Council

Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Mohammed Shahid Ali **SECONDED** the recommendations as set out in the report.

After discussion, Councillor Joshua Peck **MOVED** and Councillor Carli Harper-Penman **SECONDED** "That the question be now put."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The recommendations as moved by Councillor Lutfur Rahman and seconded by Councillor Mohammed Shahid Ali were then put to the vote and were **agreed**. Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- (a) To note the review of proportionality at paragraph 3 of the report; and
- (b) To note that no change is required to the allocation of seats on committees and panels made at the last Council meeting and set out at paragraph 4 of the report.

11. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Change to order of business

Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business within agenda item 11 be varied to allow (i) Motion 11.6 on the London Living Wage to be taken first (ii); Motion 11.3 on ending child poverty to be taken second; and (iii) the remaining motions then to be taken in order as listed in the agenda including the additional motion 11.13 accepted onto the agenda earlier in the meeting."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

11.6 Motion submitted by Councillor Lutfur Rahman regarding the London Living Wage

Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Rachael Saunders **SECONDED** the motion 11.6 as set out in the agenda.

Extension of time for the meeting

Councillor Lutfur Rahman **MOVED** and Councillor Rachael Saunders **SECONDED** "That under Procedure Rule 9.1 the meeting be extended until 11.00pm."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

After discussion of motion 11.6, an amendment was **MOVED** by Councillor Ahmed Hussain and **SECONDED** by Councillor Dr Emma Jones as follows:-

"That after bullet point 4, the following bullet points be added before the last bullet point:

- That the Council through its joint Director of Human Resources will ensure that the Tower Hamlets PCT will also take on board the GLA's living wage unit and ensure that all its sub contractors and partners are taking this on through their procurement process;
- That the standards agency of the Council will enforce the living wage throughout the borough with all the existing and new establishments in the borough over a targeted time limit"

After further discussion the amendment **MOVED** by Councillor Ahmed Hussain and **SECONDED** by Councillor Dr. Emma Jones was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

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

RESOLVED

That this Council:

- supports the establishment of the London Living Wage, set at a level calculated by the Living Wage Unit to avoid poverty wages being paid in the capital;
- abhors the fact that around 400,000 Londoners continue to fall into a 'working poverty trap' because their families are paid less than required to fund the basic costs of living in London;
- calls on the Leader to review Tower Hamlets Council's procurement, contract and best value policies to ensure that, as far as possible within

UK and EU law, the London Living Wage, at the level set by the GLA's Living Wage Unit, is the minimum paid by Tower Hamlets Council and by its contractors and that all temporary workers employed by the council are paid at least £7.45 an hour by their agency;

- calls on the Leader to seek commitments from Tower Hamlets' partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to pay no less than the London Living Wage; and
- calls on the Leader to ensure that the Council's commitment to the London Living Wage is clearly displayed on Council headed paper, the Council website and other appropriate locations.

11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Clair Hawkins regarding ending child poverty in Tower Hamlets

Councillor Clair Hawkins **MOVED** and Councillor Lutfur Rahman **SECONDED** the motion 11.3 as set out in the agenda.

After discussion an amendment was **MOVED** by Councillor Peter Golds and **SECONDED** by Councillor Tim Archer as follows:-

"Delete points 2 and 5 and insert new point 2 'All parties represented on Tower Hamlets Council are committed to ending all forms of child poverty within the Borough.'"

Following discussion the amendment was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

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

RESOLVED

That this Council notes:

- That research by the End Child Poverty campaign shows that there are 42,000 children living in poverty in Tower Hamlets;
- That child poverty doubled during 18 years of Tory misrule from 1979 to 1997;
- The historic commitment by the Labour Government to halve Child Poverty by 2010 and the fact that the goal of ending child poverty by 2020 was enshrined in law in the Queen's Speech this month;
- The raft of measures announced in November's pre-budget report that will help to lessen the burden on the most vulnerable people in society as the recession takes hold;

- Regret at the failure of the Conservative Party to support many legislative measures that are necessary to end child poverty by 2020;
- That the End Child Poverty campaign has praised Tower Hamlets achievements in education;
- The Council's commitment and actions to date to address child poverty have been recognised by being short-listed for a Beacon award for Preventing and Tackling Child Poverty;
- Reducing Child Poverty is a priority in the Tower Hamlets Local Area Agreement with suitably challenging and ambitious targets; and
- That the causes of child poverty are many and complex and that eradicating child poverty will require strong partnership working with central government, the Mayor of London, the third sector and other partners.

This Council believes:

- That preventing and tackling child poverty must continue to be a Council priority;
- That this Council continues to support the ongoing work to develop an integrated child poverty strategy;
- That eradicating child poverty will only be achieved through multi-agency partnership working;
- That the current Scrutiny review into child poverty will inform the work around our strategy; and
- That Child Poverty must be a theme that runs through the new three year Children and Young People's Plan

This Council resolves:

- To sign up to and deliver on the London Child Poverty Pledge
- To accelerate the development of its Child Poverty Strategy to prevent and tackle child poverty with key partners working to address four priority areas:
 - (i) removing barriers to work which includes offering parents childcare options that allow them to go to work, and also supporting them in their search for employment;
 - (ii) developing pathways to work, through investment in long term training options in the basic skills that lead to employment;

- (iii) breaking the cycle of poverty, which includes the council's continued focus on improving education, improving careers advice and guidance and preventing young people from becoming NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training); and
- (iv) mitigating the effects of poverty, including making sure local young people have access to cultural, leisure and sporting activities and developing extended services.

Change to order of business

Councillor Stephanie Eaton **MOVED** and Councillor Lutfur Rahman **SECONDED** "That under Procedural Rule 14.1.3 the order of the remaining business be varied to take motion 11.2 on Community Cohesion and ID cards as the next item."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

11.2 Motion submitted by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding community cohesion and ID cards

Councillor Stephanie Eaton **MOVED** and Councillor Carli Harper-Penman **SECONDED** the motion 11.2 as set out in the agenda.

The motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

That this Council notes:

1. That Parliament has created identity card legislation.
2. This legislation will have an impact on all residents within Tower Hamlets.

This Council believes:

1. That the proposed scheme will impose substantial and disproportionate costs on the Council.
2. That the cost of ID cards would be better spent on employing crime prevention measures such as more police officers, and target hardening.
3. ID cards have the potential to have a negative impact on social cohesion and notes the concerns of the Metropolitan Police Service to that effect:

'The scheme could become compulsory prematurely for those disadvantaged members of society, because they would have to have an ID Card in order to access Social Security Benefits, etc. It should also be noted that many of the visible ethnic minorities are over-represented in this socio-economically deprived group. We have severe reservations that the scheme could add to tensions at a time when the police service is investing greatly in gaining confidence across all communities'.

This Council will:

1. Make it a policy of the Council to ensure that national identity cards would not be required to access council services or benefits unless specifically required to do so by Act of Parliament.
2. Take no part in any pilot scheme or feasibility work in relation to the introduction of the national identity cards.
3. Only co-operate with the national identity card scheme where to do otherwise would be unlawful.
4. Affiliate to the NO2ID campaign whose supporters already include MPs and Peers of all parties, Borough, County and District Councils, and unions (including UNISON, the largest union in the UK with 1.3 million members).

Motions 11.1, 11.4, 11.5 and 11.7 – 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).

- 11.1 Motion submitted by Councillor Abjol Miah regarding parking**
- 11.4 Motion submitted by Councillor Ahmed Hussain regarding the future of homeowners and the local economy in Tower Hamlets**
- 11.5 Motion submitted by Councillor Dulal Uddin regarding pensions**
- 11.7 Motion submitted by Councillor Fozol Miah regarding the Olympics**
- 11.8 Motion submitted by Councillor Alex Heslop regarding support for the co-operative and social enterprise sector**
- 11.9 Motion submitted by Councillor Mohammed Abdul Munim regarding postal votes**
- 11.10 Motion submitted by Councillor Salim Ullah regarding homophobia and prejudice**
- 11.11 Motion submitted by Councillor Harun Miah regarding Council Tax and services**

11.12 Motion submitted by Councillor Mamun Rashid regarding police representation

11.13 Motion submitted by Councillor Abjol Miah regarding Woolworths (urgent motion)

The meeting ended at 11.00 p.m.

Mayor,
Tower Hamlets Council