

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 22nd APRIL 2009

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Fifteen motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for the Council meeting on Wednesday 22nd April 2009.
2. In accordance with the protocol agreed by the Council on 21st May 2008, the order in which the motions are listed is by turns, one from each group, continuing in rotation until all motions submitted are included. The rotation starts with any group(s) not reached at the previous meeting.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months unless notice of motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf are the motions that have been submitted.

11.1 Motion submitted by Councillor Tim Archer regarding local bin taxes/Waste Incentive Pilot Schemes

Proposed: Councillor Tim Archer

Seconded: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council notes that:

1. The Government is moving ahead with plans to introduce new local bin taxes, through so-called 'waste incentive pilot schemes', which will subsequently be rolled out to two in three homes according to Whitehall estimates.
2. Even the Government's own optimistic Impact Assessment admits that the poorest families will pay £72.31 a year more, and the Treasury has stated the new 'waste incentives' are officially classified as a tax.
3. Bin taxes will lead to a surge in fly-tipping and backyard burning, and in the Republic of Ireland, bin taxes have led to 4 in 10 households now burning their rubbish, and such burning of now causes 73% of all dioxin emissions.
4. The Government is not properly compensating local authorities for the new burdens imposed through landfill taxes and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, increasing pressure on council tax.

This Council resolves to:

1. Oppose Government plans for new bin taxes.
2. Write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs rejecting the Government's invitation to participate in these new charges for the collection of household waste.
3. Call on the Secretary of State to ensure local authorities are properly compensated for new burdens imposed by central government, instead of introducing new taxes.

11.2 Motion submitted by Councillor Lutfur Rahman regarding Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Memorial

Proposed: Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Seconded: Councillor Joshua Peck

This Council notes that:

- 3rd March marks the 66th anniversary of the Bethnal Green Tube disaster;
- 173 East Enders died in this tragic wartime accident, the vast majority of them women and children;
- That news of this tragedy was withheld from the British Public to protect morale, and it is still little known today outside Bethnal Green
- The Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Memorial Trust has been founded to campaign for a fitting memorial to those who lost their lives that day;
- Planning permission has now been granted for the erection of this memorial;
- Former Mayor, Cllr Ann Jackson, raised over £30,000 towards the Trust's campaign fund during her year in office;
- Despite this, the Trust remains a long way short of its £650,000 target and is struggling to secure Lottery Funding.

This Council believes that;

- Alf Morris and the other members of the Steering Committee have done the East End a great service by highlighting the tragedy and establishing the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster memorial Trust
- the time has now come for Tower Hamlets Council to make its proper contribution towards this memorial.

This Council therefore resolves:

- That a sum of £100,000 should be committed to the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Memorial Trust by LB Tower Hamlets;
- To support the work of the Memorial Trust by helping it seek donations from local businesses and residents;
- To encourage all current and future councillors to play their part in ensuring that this tragedy is never forgotten.
- In the first instance to look at section 106 money and then to consider other options if required.

11.3 Motion submitted by Councillor Stephanie Eaton regarding future provision of a Multi-Faith Burial Ground

Proposed: Councillor Stephanie Eaton

Seconded: Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan

This Council notes:

1. All Councils are required to produce a Local Development Framework and in Tower Hamlets that will comprise a series of Development Plan Documents including a Core Strategy and a Site Allocations document.
2. Tower Hamlets Council has recently undertaken consultation on the second phase of the Local Development Framework - Core Strategy. The consultation document 'Core Strategy - Options and Alternatives for Places' looked at how growth and change will affect the different places in Tower Hamlets.
3. The places plan for LAPs 5 and 6 identifies as one of the long term objectives (5-15 years) the plan "to regenerate the Bow Common Gasworks site as a place for family housing "

This Council further notes:

1. The longstanding wishes of local people for a new multi-faith burial facility in the Borough
2. The difficulty of finding suitable sites for a multi-faith burial facility in the Borough

This Council proposes:

1. That the Local Development Framework Core Strategy sets out clear criteria for identifying appropriate locations for a future multi-faith burial facility
2. That the Local Development Framework Core Strategy does not identify the Bow Common Gasworks site solely as a place for family housing
3. That the Site Allocations Development Plan Document explores all appropriate options for a future multi-faith burial facility within the borough for example Bow Common Gasworks.

11.4 Motion submitted by Councillor Abjol Miah regarding control over sex encounter venues

Proposed: Councillor Abjol Miah

Seconded: Councillor Harun Miah

1) This Council notes

a) the rapid growth of lap dancing clubs in the wake of changes to licensing legislation in 2003 which allow lap dancing clubs to set up on the basis of a premises licence, which is the same licence as applies to cafes and restaurants

b) that the government has attempted to address this problem by including in Clause 25 of the Policing and Crime bill currently going through parliament which creates a new licensing category of “sex encounter venues”

c) that Clause 25 of the Policing and Crime Bill makes the licensing provisions for “sex encounter venues” optional on councils and also includes a frequency-based exemption.

d) that Tower Hamlets residents do not want Tower Hamlets to be a dumping ground for “sex encounter venues” for City slickers, especially as the Corporation of the City of London prevents such clubs from opening in the City of London.

2) This Council deplores the growth of lap dancing clubs which are degrading to women

3) This Council congratulates the Fawcett Society and the campaigning group OBJECT which have engaged in an effective campaign to bring about the legislative changes currently going through parliament.

4) This Council regrets, alongside many other councils, MPs from all parties and the Fawcett Society and OBJECT, that the government has made the new provisions for licensing lap dancing clubs optional for councils and that a frequency-based exemption has been included and that these two provisions will undermine the effectiveness of the changes included in the Policing and Crime Bill to licence “sex encounter venues“.

5) This Council urges the Government to remove optionality and frequency based exemptions from the licencing of “sex encounter venues” in order to ensure there is much stricter control over lap dancing venues in future.

11.5 Motion submitted by Councillor Peter Golds regarding lighting in Brickfield Gardens

Proposed: Councillor Peter Golds

Seconded: Councillor Tim Archer

This Council notes the shocking levels of anti-social behaviour, drinking, drug taking and unsavoury activities taking place in the bushes, in Brickfield Gardens, Limehouse.

This Council notes that improved street lighting is the most effective deterrent to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.

This Council therefore resolves to install lighting in Brickfield Gardens to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and return the park to the law abiding residents.

11.6 Motion submitted by Councillor Marc Francis regarding Strangers into Citizens campaign

Proposed: Councillor Marc Francis

Seconded: Councillor Lutfur Rahman

This Council notes:

That the government is committed to tightening UK border controls and introducing new monitoring and assessment systems into the immigration process;

That the Home Office estimates that there are currently around 500,000 irregular migrants living and working in Britain, around 400,000 of them in London;

The contribution of irregular migrants to the national and regional economy;

That in the current economic crisis, irregular migrants are more vulnerable than ever to exploitation and abuse;

That the “strangers into citizens” campaign, orchestrated by London Citizens, has cross-party support from Councils, MPs and both the current and former Mayors of London.

This Council resolves:

To publicly support London Citizen’s “Strangers into Citizens” campaign for the one-off regularization of long-term irregular migrants;

To encourage other Local Authorities to do so;

To urge the Government to adopt the Strangers into Citizens proposal for an earned right of residence subject to and in accordance with the tests applied to other migrants.

11.7 Motion submitted by Councillor Tim O’Flaherty regarding eliminating excessive punishment for minor parking offences

Proposed: Councillor Tim O’Flaherty

Seconded: Councillor Stephanie Eaton

This Council notes:

1. That parking controls are necessary to ensure the availability of parking for entitled residents and their visitors, business people, traders and others;
2. That parking management and the promotion of public transport is essential to control traffic flow, avoid climate change and improve air quality;
3. That many residents value the use of a car, and that vehicle use is often essential for e.g. businesses, families, and to enable people with disabilities to participate in all aspects of community life;

This Council believes:

1. That breaches of parking regulations should be enforced fairly and rigorously;
2. That the penalty charge for a breach of a parking regulations is a necessary deterrent to ensure parking space is available to those who need it and are entitled to use it;
3. That where a vehicle is parked dangerously, or in a disabled bay or other area that blocks access for a particular purpose, immediate action to remove a vehicle is necessary and reasonable;
4. That the punishment for a breach of a non-serious parking offence (one that attracts a lower penalty charge notice) initially should be a penalty charge notice and no other action;
5. That where a lower penalty charge notice has been issued but a vehicle is parked safely, immediate action should not be taken to clamp that vehicle or remove that vehicle to the pound;
6. That where a lower penalty charge notice has been issued but the vehicle is parked safely, there should be a minimum period of 6 hours between the issue of the penalty charge notice and any clamping of the vehicle or the removal of a vehicle parked safely to enable the owner of that vehicle to remove the vehicle to a location where it is not in breach of any parking regulations;
7. That where a safely parked vehicle is in breach of a minor parking regulation the rapid removal of the vehicle to the pound and the costs and inconvenience incurred by the owner of the vehicle amounts to disproportionate ‘punishment’.

This Council directs:

1. Officers to undertake a review of the parking enforcement policy and engage in consultation with residents with the intention of eliminating cases where a

minor breach of a parking regulation (which currently would attract a penalty charge notice £120 reduced to £60 if paid within 14 days) results in a payment by the resident of this £60 penalty charge plus £200 fee for release of the vehicle from the pound;

2. Officers to provide a report to Cabinet by June 2009 which recommends measures to eliminate disproportionate and excessive 'punishment' in relation to penalties for parking offences.

11.8 Motion submitted by Councillor Harun Miah regarding market charges and parking

Proposed: Councillor Harun Miah

Seconded: Councillor Mamun Rashid

1) This Council notes:

a) that we are facing a very severe recession which may even become a depression

b) that the recession is badly affecting trade in Tower Hamlets historic markets

c) that Tower Hamlets historic markets provide employment and income for many people in Tower Hamlets and a vital and cheap source of products to Tower Hamlets residents

d) that recent rises in charges for market stalls are adversely impacting on traders facing falling sales in the wake of the recession

e) that vital consumers both resident in Tower Hamlets and coming into Tower Hamlets from other boroughs are being discouraged from using our historic markets through a lack of parking, high parking charges and a draconian regime of parking control including penalty notices and tow-aways.

2) This Council requests Council officers to:

a) draw up an emergency plan to assist traders in difficulty with their stall charges including investigating the possibility of rent reductions and holidays.

b) draw up plans to make parking free for longer in the vicinity of markets and explore the possibility of making more parking spaces available, at least on a temporary basis, at the times that markets are trading.

11.9 Motion submitted by Councillor Ahmed Hussain regarding local pharmacies throughout the borough

Proposed: Councillor Ahmed Hussain

Seconded: Councillor Peter Golds

The Council notes that:

- Within the health strategy the local pharmacies play a crucial part in our lives;
- The pharmacies have always been a business enterprise and have had to come up with their own money to serve us;
- Without their vital role we would not have been able to survive as well as we are today. They play a significant role especially to those who cannot afford the cost of medicine;
- In the current climate a lot of the pharmacies are going out of business most owners have had to re-mortgage their homes to stay in the business to serve us.
- The current PCT and government strategy do not have a vision to help them stay on course. They have to bid for their business and compete with European and American companies such as Atoss Origin.

The Council agrees that:

- The pharmacies have a vital role in the community;
- They provide a substantial service to those who cannot afford prescribed medicine;
- They clearly fit into the "One Tower Hamlets" strategy;
- It is vital to help our residents that are in the business within this economical climate;
- We would need to protect the local employees that are engaged in these pharmacies

We call upon the Council and those responsible to:

- Help the local pharmacist to stay in business;
- Engage with the PCT to see how we can keep the current pharmacies in business and protect the local employees;
- Ensure that we do not get companies like Atoss Origin, which has proven to be a disaster so far

11.10 Motion submitted by Councillor Alex Heslop regarding support for the co-operative and social enterprise sector

Proposed: Councillor Alex Heslop

Seconded: Councillor Denise Jones

This Council recognises that there is a diverse and healthy co-operative sector in Tower Hamlets with a combined turnover of approximately £50 million and also appreciates the important role that co-operatives and other social enterprises can play in community and economic regeneration initiatives. Although there are many successful co-operative enterprises operating in Tower Hamlets such as Tower Hamlets Community Credit Union, Tower Hamlets CDA and Greenwich Leisure (effectively a workers co-op), as well as several food co-ops and housing co-operatives, there is not a single Council officer with a specific remit or indeed expertise for working with the co-operative & social enterprise sectors.

This Council resolves to do the following:

- Allocate responsibility for supporting the co-operative & social enterprise sectors to the Lead Member for Regeneration as well as a designated Council officer who will promote and support new mutual models for the provision of community services, including housing, pre-school childcare, residential and home care, recycling and leisure. Made possible through service reviews, externalising, or re-contracting services and procurement procedures.
- Organise an annual event to celebrate International Co-operatives Day in partnership with the local Co-operative Movement; this could also involve the Tower Hamlets Partnership and its Creating and Sharing Prosperity Community Plan Action Group.
- Develop procurement strategies that make a direct link between the Community Plan and other strategic objectives and contract specifications ensuring that community benefits can be fully integrated into the procurement process.
- Work with the Co-operative Sector and London Development Agency to improve access to finance and support for socially and mutually owned businesses.
- Work with staff and unions on a partnership basis in the creation of new cooperative services

11.11 Motion submitted by Councillor Fozol Miah regarding Bow Gurdwara fire

Proposed: Councillor Fozol Miah

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes

a) the terrible fire which destroyed the Gurdwara Sikh Sangat, Harley Grove, Bow on 16th March 2009

b) the anguish, upset and anger this has caused in the Sikh community

c) the efforts of Council officers to ensure that facilities are found for the members of the Gurdwara to continue their worship

d) that the Police are giving the investigation of the causes of the fire and the identification of any perpetrator a very high priority

e) that the concerns for and sympathy with the Bow Gurdwara members and the Sikh Community extends across people of all faiths and none in Tower Hamlets

This Council urges

a) anyone who knows anything about the fire to contact the police and to co-operate fully in their investigation

b) the police and other authorities including the Council to continue to give this issue a very high priority and to provide all the help and support they can to the members of the Bow Gurdwara

This Council expresses the utmost sympathy and solidarity with the members of the Gurdwara Sikh Sangat and the wider Sikh community for this terrible fire which has destroyed a holy place revered across all faith communities and residents of Tower Hamlets.

11.12 Motion submitted by Councillor Sirajul Islam regarding condemning homophobia and prejudice

Proposed: Councillor Sirajul Islam

Seconded: Councillor Lutfur Rahman

This Council:

Condemns the recent attack on a man in Shoreditch, which the police are treating as homophobic;

Recognises that homophobia is a major issue in Tower Hamlets, as in the rest of London and the UK;

Recognises that other prejudices and hatred can lead to violence and intimidation;

Restates its opposition to prejudice, and its commitment to campaigning for equality, specifically to campaigning for equality for groups that often suffer discrimination, such as women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people;

Supports legislation passed by the Labour government prohibiting religious hatred, and continues to assert the importance of respecting the beliefs of those of all faiths and none.

This Council resolves to:

Adopt a zero tolerance approach to all forms of hate crime.

Encourage the Local MPs and GLA member to work with the Council to compile information on crimes that relate to prejudice and discrimination, such as:

- hate crimes that relate to all equality strands including age - violence, name calling, insults, threats of attack and other hate crimes;
- other crimes that relate to discrimination and inequality, such as domestic violence;

Encourage the Local MPs and GLA member to work with the Council to gather information on evidence of discrimination that does not relate to crime, such as pay gaps promulgated by local employers, or evidence of harassment, name calling or other such incidents that may not be reported to the police but are still important in understanding issues around discrimination and prejudice;

Ensure that all Council funded bodies uphold the values of tolerance and mutual respect amongst our whole community, including respecting different values and ways of life;

Review work going on locally that addresses discrimination and community cohesion, and to use the public sector equality duties to ensure that all public bodies are fully delivering on their obligations and help these organisations to develop and implement equality policies if they have not already done so.

Campaign to raise awareness of the issue of hate crime, in particular homophobic hate crime.

11.13 Motion submitted by Councillor Dulal Uddin regarding proliferation of Tescos

Proposed: Councillor Dulal Uddin
Seconded: Councillor Abdul Munim

This Council notes:

- a) the proliferation of Tescos Metro and Express stores across Tower Hamlets
- b) the concerns of many small, local businesses that their businesses will be adversely affected by the opening of more Tescos stores
- c) the concerns of residents about the dominant position Tescos is assuming across Tower Hamlets and the loss of choice that this may entail

This Council demands that strategic planning in Tower Hamlets takes account of the concerns of small and local businesses about their businesses being adversely affected and also of the dominant, near monopoly position Tescos is developing in Tower Hamlets

11.14 Motion submitted by Councillor Abdul Munim regarding housing crisis

Proposed: Councillor Abdul Munim
Seconded: Councillor Dulal Uddin

This Council notes:

- a) residents of Council housing in Tower Hamlets have been conned into transferring to Housing Associations with promises of better services, investment, etc.
- b) the widespread dissatisfaction with the performance of Housing Associations by the residents of these Housing associations
- c) the severe financial difficulties a number of Housing Associations are now in as a result of the economic crisis
- d) the concerns residents have about developments which may lead to significant blight to their environment and to other services in the area such as schooling

This Council welcomes the decision by the Council to abandon any further attempts to transfer Council housing stock to Housing Associations

This Council believes

- a) there needs to be a crash Council house building programme, not only to address the problems of the 23,000 people on the Council's waiting list, the massive overcrowding in Tower Hamlets and the poor condition of some housing, but also to

boost the construction industry which is in meltdown and to boost the economy more generally

b) a programme of 100% Council home building would both address the crisis and address the problems of blight produced by over-development

This Council calls on the Government

a) to bring the Council housing stock that has been transferred to housing associations back into Council ownership

b) resumes the process of direct investment in Council housing, particularly here in Tower Hamlets, where a fraction of the taxpayers money thrown at the banks will resolve much of the housing crisis in Tower Hamlets and beyond.

11.15 Motion submitted by Councillor Mamun Rashid regarding support for Lifelong Learning

Proposed: Councillor Mamun Rashid

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes the Early Day Motion number 533 Alliance for Lifelong Learning introduced by Labour MP Gordon Marsden in the House of Commons, which now has the support of 183 MPs, which says:

“That this House welcomes the launch of the Campaigning Alliance for Lifelong Learning (CALL) in September 2008; shares its concern that over 1.4 million places have been lost in the last two years in English adult education due to cuts and fee rises; notes that over 150 organisations are CALL supporters; believes that particularly at this time of recession, affordable access to the life-changing opportunities provided by education is the hallmark of a civilised society; considers that adult learning needs to be simultaneously expanded, resourced and promoted alongside work-based skills training in the Children, Skills and Learning Bill; and calls for immediate action to ensure a full range of learning opportunities for adults to adjust the Personal and Community Development Learning budget to increase with inflation, and redirect any underspend on the Train to Gain programme to meet individual learner demand.”

This Council believes that the principles being promoted by CALL are very important for the residents of Tower Hamlets and their lifelong learning opportunities and supports their campaign wholeheartedly.