

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY 2010

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11

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

SUMMARY

1. Twelve motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for the Council meeting on Wednesday 27th January 2010.
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 Parking policy in Tower Hamlets

Proposed: Councillor Abjol Miah

Seconded: Councillor Dulal Uddin

This Council notes that:

- a) the policy of ticketing, clamping and removal of vehicles in this borough is widely reviled by car owners as unjust
- b) around £5 million is raised annually from car owners through the issuing of penalty charge notices and retrievals from the car pound
- c) grievances include the draconian exercise of clamping and removal powers on Council and registered council estates
- d) lack of signage as to the parking restrictions in some areas of the borough
- e) confusion caused by the presence of parking restrictions on Sundays in some parts of the borough
- f) confusion caused by significant differences over the times of parking restrictions in different parts of the borough
- g) confusion caused by the welcome concession of allowing two hours free parking around market areas at market times
- h) the recent statement by the Council that “the length of time a car is parked before removal is immaterial”
- j) the opposition of the vast majority of residents on some estates, such as John Smith Mews, E14, to the introduction of a clamping system for parking on their estate
- k) penalty charge notices, decamping fees and retrieval fees are extremely high for those on lower incomes

This Council believes that:

- a) the primary purpose of the Council’s parking policy should be to enable residents and others with legitimate parking rights to park as conveniently as possible and to ensure that traffic is not blocked by parking
- b) the primary purpose should not be to punish car owners for minor transgressions of the rules
- c) the primary purpose should not be to raise funds for the Council by a punitive tax on some car owners

d) the Council and registered social landlords should not impose clamping and other parking penalties where the residents of an estate are clearly overwhelmingly opposed to those penalties

e) the parking policy should be applied with due respect to common sense and what is reasonable and unreasonable in the specific circumstances

f) the length of time a vehicle is parked in circumstances that transgress parking restrictions is material, as are the reasons why a vehicle might be temporarily parked in circumstances which transgress parking restrictions, and that car owners should be given a reasonable chance to remove their vehicles where such transgression has occurred

g) Tower Hamlets parking policy should be subject to a root and branch review to make it more reasonable, comprehensible and acceptable to car owners and users.

11.2 Reducing carbon emissions by 10% in 2010

Proposed: Councillor Stephanie Eaton

Seconded: Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan

This Council notes that:

1. Climate change predictions show that without severe cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, the world will be hit by drought, flooding and famine affecting all of us and the poorest countries in particular. Some of these countries are already suffering from the effects of climate change. This is an issue of social justice as well as a call to take environmental action.

2. Under the UK Climate Change Act 2008 the UK is due to cut its emissions by 34% by 2020, but that, according to many climate change scientists, a cut of 10% in 2010 is in line with what is now needed to avert devastating climate change.

3. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which meets in Copenhagen in December of this year, may be the world's last chance to negotiate a deal that will avert the worst consequences of climate change.

4. To ensure a breakthrough at the critical Copenhagen conference, government ministers need to know that the public supports more dramatic cuts in emissions than have been proposed to date.

5. Tower Hamlets borough has already signed up to the Local Area Agreement indicator 186 – per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the local authority area.

This Council resolves:

1. To support the aims and ambitions of the 10:10 Campaign to reduce carbon emissions by 10% in 2010.

2. To sign up the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to the 10:10 Campaign and to institute a Borough wide information and publicity campaign to enable residents and local businesses to contribute to this goal of reducing emissions.

11.3 Olympic Legacy and Affordable Housing

Proposed: Councillor Marc Francis

Seconded: Councillor Lutfur Rahman

This Council notes:

- The commitment of the Government, Mayor of London and Olympic Delivery Organisation (ODA) to delivering a lasting legacy to the people of London resulting from the 2012 Games.
- The creation of the Olympic Legacy Company to deliver this pledge.
- The use of £1 billion of public money by the London Development Agency (LDA) to purchase land for the Olympic sites.
- That there are almost 100,000 households on council housing waiting lists in the five 'Olympic boroughs'.

Given this level of housing need, this Council believes:

- That the current policy of 35 per cent 'affordable' housing (split 50/50 between social rented and 'intermediate') is inadequate and unacceptable as only 17 per cent of the homes built are likely to be of benefit to those on housing waiting lists.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Call on the Government and Mayor of London to instruct the ODA and Olympic Legacy Company to require that 50 per cent of all new homes built on the Olympic site should be affordable (split 70/30 social rented, including council housing, and intermediate), in order to ensure a real housing legacy for Londoners.

11.4 East End Homes Leaseholders and Freeholders Association

Proposed: Councillor Tim Archer

Seconded: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council notes:

- The increasing dissatisfaction being registered by leaseholders and freeholders of Eastend Homes
- The number of recent LVT decisions that have gone against Eastend Homes or where Eastend Homes have not disputed the claim.
- The formation of the borough-wide Eastend Homes Leaseholders and Freeholders Association.

- That Eastend Homes have refused to recognise this important group of leaseholders.

This Council believes:

- That Leaseholders need to be treated fairly and equitably, as demonstrated by the Council's own Independent Audit of Leaseholder Service charges, and its on-going commitment to the Dispute resolution process.

This Council resolves to:

- Encourage in the strongest possible way Eastend Homes to recognise the Eastend Homes Leaseholders and Freeholders Association and to commit to working positively with them to resolve leaseholder issues.

11.5 Car Free Zones

Proposed: Councillor Dulal Uddin

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council welcomes:

- a) the acknowledgement by the Council that the so-called Car Free Zone policy has been flawed
- b) the proposal to abandon the blanket policy of excluding all residents of Car Free Zones from qualifying for residents parking permits and to allow those who already hold such permits to take them with them if they move to a Car Free Zone

This Council notes that:

- a) the Council's proposals to modify the so-called Car Free Zone policy will not help a variety of victims of this policy who were misled into moving to Car Free Zones such as Mrs Naasir and her family who are being asked to move yet again if they are to qualify for a residents permit in order to keep her car which enables her to transport her family safely and economically or Mr Golding who has part bought his property and will have to sell up or give up his black cab on which he depends for his income or Mr Mohamed who is being asked to pay £520 per year to park his car on his estate by his registered social landlord, or the residents of Horseferry Road who have had their permits suddenly and summarily withdrawn by the Council or many others who have been the victims of injustice in relation to this scheme
- b) the Council's proposals do not go nearly far enough therefore in addressing these multiple injustices
- c) Car Free Zones tend to discriminate in favour of wealthier residents and against less well off residents

d) Car Free Zones are not Car Free in that they often have estate parking although this may be restricted and expensive

This Council believes that:

a) there is a problem of parking capacity in the borough especially as Car Free Zones are not especially effective in relieving pressure on parking spaces because of widespread avoidance

b) there is an environmental problem arising from excessive car use

c) Car Free Zones have not been an effective or equitable way of dealing with these problems

d) Council officers urgently need to address the specific injustices that have been caused by the Car Free Zone policy including the discriminatory effects against the less well off and those with larger families and come back with much more radical policies than the damp squib announced at the last full Council meeting.

11.6 Reducing Carbon Emissions

Proposed: Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Seconded: Councillor Lutfur Rahman

This Council notes:-

Climate change is having severe consequences around the world and in particular having devastating effects in some of the poorest countries in the world.

Climate change is already happening in the UK – the ten hottest years on record have all been since 1990 and this winter has been the coldest for 30 years.

The Labour Government's 2008 Climate Change Act made Britain the first country in the world to set a legally binding 'carbon budget', aiming to cut UK emissions by 34% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050 through investment in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies.

The leadership shown on this issue at the Copenhagen conference by Gordon Brown and Ed Milliband

The Labour Government has more than doubled spending on flood protection since 1997 and developed a heat wave plan in the NHS.

That action by local authorities is critical to the achievement of the Government climate change objectives and is uniquely placed to provide vision and leadership to the local communities by raising awareness and influencing behaviours.

This Council is already committed to:

Local Area Agreement indicator 186 – aiming for a reduction of 10 per cent per capita in CO2 emissions for residents.

A 25 per cent reduction of its own carbon emissions by 2012, 40 per cent by 2016 and 60 per cent by 2020.

This Council resolves:

To formally pledge its support for the 10:10 campaign, the aims of which it is already working towards

To increase awareness among residents of the importance of reducing carbon emissions – especially where doing so can also save money by reducing gas and heating bills.

To use the lessons learned in improving recycling from 7 per cent to over 30 per cent in just 3 years to encourage behavioural change from residents of all backgrounds.

11.7 Housing Policy

Proposed: Councillor Fozol Miah

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes that:

- a) there is a massive housing crisis in Tower Hamlets
- b) well over 20,000 are on the Council's housing waiting list
- c) an estimated 15,500 families are living in overcrowded conditions, half in social and half in private housing
- d) overcrowded and poor housing are a blight which it should be the highest priority to overcome in the early part of the 21st century
- e) that the director of Tower Hamlets Homes has recently expressed concern that even if THH gets 2 star status later this year, insufficient investment will be provided to bring the 60% of Council housing stock that does not meet the decent homes standard up to that standard
- f) that Tory Mayor Boris Johnson's target of 20,000 new social and affordable homes by 2011 will be missed
- g) that Tory Mayor Boris Johnson's target of a 60/40 mix between social and affordable housing is currently being missed

h) that most new housing in Tower Hamlets is not being built as social or affordable housing but instead is being built for purchase in the private sector at prices far beyond the means of the vast majority of Tower Hamlets current residents

j) that many Tower Hamlets residents will either continue to suffer poor and/or overcrowded housing or be forced to try and move out to the outer London boroughs to find adequate and affordable housing

This Council believes that:

a) proposals from both the Conservative and Labour Parties to cut Government investment in order to address the problem of the Government's deficit will have dire consequences for building the housing we need and bringing existing housing up to the decent homes standard in Tower Hamlets

b) we need more investment in social and above all Council housing and that this investment must not be at the expense of investment of repairs and improvement

c) the target for the amount of social housing being built in Tower Hamlets should be radically revised upwards in opposition to the position of Tory Mayor Boris Johnson

d) what we need above all is a crash programme of Council house building which will boost the construction industry and the economy and is the only way to realistically address the blight of overcrowding in Tower Hamlets.

11.8 Increasing access to transport for older residents

Proposed: Councillor Joshua Peck

Seconded: Councillor Dr. Anwara Ali

This Council notes:

That affordable and accessible transport is vital to ensuring that older people have full access to services and can live full and active lives.

That although considerable improvements have been made to transport infrastructure to improve access for older people, they still face significant barriers to using public transport such as:

- Access ramps on buses not working
- Dial-a-ride and Taxi Card services often do not tie up coherently with existing public transport infrastructure
- Overcrowding on buses and tubes discourages many older people from using public transport.

This Council further notes that the Olympic Delivery Authority has been praised by Age Concern for its plans to create an integrated and accessible transport strategy around the Olympic Games.

This Council resolves:

To review how transport services are provided to older people in the borough and to lobby TfL and other stakeholders where necessary to ensure that services are safe, accessible and provide a joined-up network for the borough's older residents.

To ensure that the needs of Tower Hamlets residents, especially older residents are communicated effectively to the ODA and to use any and all means at the Council's disposal to ensure that those needs are placed front and centre of the ODA's accessible transport strategy.

11.9 Boris Johnson's Fare Rises

Proposed: Councillor Harun Miah

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes that:

a) fares for many of the less well off residents of Tower Hamlets have been subject to a huge rise sanctioned by Tory Mayor Boris Johnson who has ultimate responsibility for Transport for London

b) fare rises have been particularly targeted on the less well off who use buses with much lower increases on other fares

c) Mayor Johnson claims the fare rises are necessary to raise funds and yet he had dropped plans for an Western extension of the Congestion Charge and to tax polluting vehicles both of which are possible ways of generating more revenue

This Council believes that commuters should be encouraged to use public transport, not discouraged in order to help protect the environment

This Council deplores the massive fare rises introduced in the last few days

This Council calls on the Greater London Assembly, Mayor Boris Johnson and Transport for London to go back to the drawing board and thoroughly revise the fare rises which are discriminating against the less well off here and in the rest of London.

11.10 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 Youth Facilities

Proposed: Councillor Mamun Rashid

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes that:

- a) the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has a much higher than average number of young people
- b) there are very high levels of unemployment for school leavers in Tower Hamlets
- c) many young people live in poor and overcrowded conditions
- d) many young people lack adequate youth facilities and opportunities for self-development on their estates

e) one such estate where adequate facilities are lacking is the Pitsea Estate in Shadwell ward

This Council regrets the closure of youth facilities by the Council in the past as a grievous and short-sighted policy

This Council believes that:

a) lack of good youth facilities and opportunities for self-development amongst young people will encourage anti-social behaviour

b) good youth facilities easily accessible to young people in the areas where they reside are a necessity not a luxury

c) urgent consideration should be given by officers to expanding youth provision on estates which currently lack those facilities, especially where local community activists are coming forward with concrete proposals.

11.12 Ocean regeneration and business uncertainty

Proposed: Councillor Abdul Munim

Seconded: Councillor Abjol Miah

This Council notes that:

a) the Ocean estate is to be the subject of a major regeneration project

b) this regeneration will involve the demolition of some existing buildings

c) demolition will include Marmora House on Ben Jonson Road which houses many local shops which provide essential services to the local community

d) shop owners and keepers in Ben Jonson Road recently received letters from a developer informing them of a planning application to redevelop the site where they have their shops

e) shop owners and keepers in Ben Jonson Road have spent many years building up their businesses and serving the community

f) the letter from the developer makes no reference to providing them with alternative facilities from which to operate after they have left the existing premises or for them to have the right to return to the newly established shop premises upon completion of the redevelopment

g) this is causing severe stress and concern to the business community in Ben Jonson Road and those residents who currently depend on these shops for important and vital services

h) shop owners and keepers have made submissions to the planning department asking that alternative premises from which their businesses can operate should be guaranteed and that they should have right of return once redevelopment has been completed

This Council welcomes any development and regeneration that will benefit the residents

This Council believes that:

a) regeneration and redevelopment must take place with full consultation with residents and shop owners and keepers serving those residents and with their consent

b) there have not been adequate reassurances to businesses and residents in Ben Jonson Road and its vicinity about the nature of the regeneration and redevelopment planned for this area.

c) discussions and consultation should take place as a matter of urgency with the business community in this area to hear their concerns and to develop plans to allay those concerns.