

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 14TH JULY 2010

PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

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

SUMMARY

1. The Council's constitution provides that a maximum of six petitions and deputations in total are received at any meeting. These are taken in order of receipt within each category. This report sets out the valid petitions and deputations submitted by members of the public for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 14th July 2010.
2. The deadline for receipt of deputations and petitions for this meeting is noon on Thursday 8th July 2010. At the time of agenda despatch two petitions had been received. Any further valid petitions or deputations received before the deadline will be notified to Members before the commencement of the Council meeting.
3. In each case the members of the deputation/petitioners may address the meeting for no more than three minutes. Members may then question the deputation/petitioners for a further three minutes. The relevant Lead Member or Chair of Committee may then respond to the deputation or petition for up to three minutes.
4. Any outstanding issues will be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will respond to those outstanding issues in writing within 28 days.
5. Members should confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

5.1 PETITIONS

Two petitions have been received as set out below:-

5.1.1 Petition from Mr. Terry McGreenera and others regarding the forthcoming Mayoral elections:

“Following the failure of assurances given at the council meeting in March that checks had been put in place to eradicate the abuse of postal voting, I am petitioning the Council to introduce identity checks at polling stations and for anyone requesting a postal vote in the forthcoming mayoral election as the only way to prevent the widespread undermining of the democratic process.”

5.1.2 Petition from Mr. Sheikh Raquib and others re: the major work plans for Devons Estate Blocks

“We the undersigned leaseholders and tenants authorise this petition to stop all major work plans for Devons Estate blocks. Some of the flats already have been served with Section 20 Notice and we are objecting to those. Below are some of our reasons for concern:-

- We feel the work isn't justified and not necessary and are being done solely for Poplar Harca's interests.
- The contractors appointed are charging extortionately.
- Our views are not heard or met instead costs are forced upon us without any fairness and consideration.
- Some of the major works isn't needed for example: double glazing windows that are in good working condition but proposal is to replace them with new ones. Why should leaseholders pay for someone else's windows and service that they don't use such as lift for those ground floor leaseholders? When voting Poplar Harca in we were promised that they will operate same way as Tower Hamlets and costs won't rise. Since then there has been a large rise on service charge and recharges for items we don't know about or need.
- The payment plans to pay back for major works are structured as a bank only to profit Poplar Harca and they are supposed to be a charitable organisation. This will only put us in further debt and in the long run we would have to surrender our lease. This is because majority of leaseholders are not on high income or have private businesses. This not a wealthy estate.
- The flats were bought as an investment opportunity with family savings for a way out to a better future. This is our livelihood and it seems like it is being taken away slowly by applying large bills and interpreting each

section of our leases to charge us for any or all types of cost to favour themselves. This is unfair and inconsiderate. We believed Poplar Harca to be a people's housing association and trusted them to liaise with us before going ahead with any costs.

- Poplar Harca tenant's rent has gone up and other new costs are being applied which they are not happy about.
- We would like an honest open plan and transparent discussion. If however we don't then we may have to look at alternative solutions either by taking on management of each block ourselves or complaining to the Leaseholder Valuation Tribunal Service. This will be extremely unpopular approach and costly. We would like to in the first instance resolve this dispute between each other if we are to look at the future of Devons Estate to prosper."

5.2 DEPUTATIONS

No deputations have been received at the time of printing the agenda.