

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 14th JULY 2010

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by Members of the Council for response by Members of the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 14th July 2010.
2. Questions are limited to one per Member per meeting, plus one supplementary question unless the Member has indicated that only a written reply is required and in these circumstances a supplementary question is not permitted.
3. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. There is a time limit of thirty minutes for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any question not answered within this time will be dealt with by way of a written response. The Mayor will decide the time allocated to each question.
5. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

32 questions have been received from Members of the Council as follows:-

7.1 Question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

"On 24 May 2010 Chancellor George Osborne announced reductions in public sector spending of £6.243 billion pounds. £1.165 billion of the total budget cut will come from grants to local government. Can the Lead Member inform us of the magnitude of problems Tower Hamlets will face because of this cut and how the Council is going to embark upon the deficit issue without cutting front line services? "

7.2 Question from Councillor Zara Davis to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun

"With 28% of children in Tower Hamlets having been victims of bullying, would the Lead Member explain what is being done to tackle bullying in our schools?"

7.3 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Helal Abbas

"Can the Leader explain the steps the Council took to ensure the safety of Tower Hamlets residents in light of the recent events involving the Troxy, English Defence League (EDL) and United East End?"

7.4 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Lead Member for Housing, Heritage and Planning, Councillor Marc Francis

"Will the Lead Member outline the most recent actions undertaken regarding the future of Poplar Baths?"

7.5 Question from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun

"Can the Lead Member tell us what activities the Council plans for young people in the Borough over the summer school holidays?"

7.6 Question from Councillor David Snowden to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Helal Abbas

“The Tower Hamlets partnership is facing, by my count, its third Restructuring in as many years. There is great uncertainty amongst Steering Group members as to what the future holds, and a co-chairs meeting attended by myself and Cllr Jackson showed key officers to be incapable of explaining clearly exactly how the new structures will work. Will the lead member explain how the new structures will work, especially the relationship between the Ward Panels and the Steering Groups?”

7.7 Question from Councillor Shafiqul Haque to the Lead Member for Environment, Councillor Shahed Ali

“Could the Lead Member confirm what steps he has taken to address the parking and CCTV issue surrounding Whitechapel, New Road and adjacent to Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel?”

7.8 Question from Councillor Peter Golds to the Lead Member for Regeneration and Employment, Councillor Sirajul Islam

“As only 62 Tower Hamlets residents secured jobs on the Olympic Site as a result of applications advertised in through borough's Job Brokerages Scheme, what steps are the Development and Renewal directorate taking to improve this?”

7.9 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs to the Lead Member for Culture and Creative Industries, Councillor Denise Jones

“How many more young people, adults and over 60s have taken up swimming as a result of the free swimming initiative and what impact will the cancellation of funding by the coalition government have?”

7.10 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Abdal Ullah

“Given the recent incidents around the Blackwall and East India DLR station, including muggings reported in, what will the Lead Member be doing to reassure local residents and combat the problem?”

7.11 Question from Councillor Ann Jackson to the Lead Member for Housing, Heritage and Planning, Councillor Marc Francis

“Can the Lead Member inform us as to the benefits of the Council’s new Lettings Policy and the effect it will have on those residents on the housing waiting list?”

7.12 Question from Councillor Maium Miah to the Lead Member for Environment, Councillor Shahed Ali

“Will the Lead Member indicate what strategy he has in place to improve roads in Millwall Ward?”

7.13 Question from Councillor Judith Gardiner to the Lead Member for Children’s Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun

“How many young people in the Borough have benefited from the Every Child A Reader initiative and what impact will the cancellation of its funding by the coalition government have?”

7.14 Question from Councillor Craig Aston to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

“Will the Lead Member indicate what the Council’s plans are for the former Limehouse Library buildings?”

7.15 Question from Councillor Ahmed Omer to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Rachael Saunders

“Could the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing confirm whether elderly services would be affected by the Tory Liberal government?”

7.16 Question from Councillor Dr. Emma Jones to the Lead Member for Children’s Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun

“Will the Lead Member outline the Council’s proposals and locations for new secondary schools within the borough?”

7.17 Question from Councillor Bill Turner to the Lead Member for Children’s Services, Councillor Marc Shiria Khatun

“Comprehensive schools in Tower Hamlets have a proud record of getting excellent results for our children, and all council members will have enjoyed celebrating the numerous successes of young people, often exceeding results

in more affluent areas. Given the change of government and the more hostile funding environment in Inner London as a result of decisions made by the Coalition government, what will the Lead Member do to ensure that Tower Hamlets children are able to continue receiving excellent comprehensive education in future?"

7.18 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

"In their 2008/09 annual report the Council's internal auditors gave only limited assurance to the Council's processes for managing sickness absence of staff. What improvement has taken place since the auditors' report, how many days of work are lost through sickness absence annually and how much does sickness absence cost this Council?"

7.19 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Abdal Ullah

"Can the Lead Member tell us what initiatives are currently taking place to reduce crime in Tower Hamlets and how successful they have been to date?"

7.20 Question from Councillor Harun Miah to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Helal Abbas

"Does the Lead Member agree with me that the English Defence League is a racist organisation intent on inciting racial hatred especially towards members of the Muslim community, that the EDL has encouraged physical violence wherever it has organised its thugs to demonstrate and that it should be banned from coming to Tower Hamlets?"

7.21 Question from Councillor Kosru Uddin to the Lead Member for Culture and Creative Industries, Councillor Denise Jones

"How many young people have benefited from five hours of culture each week from the Find Your Talent and what benefits has this brought about?"

7.22 Question from Councillor Anwar Khan to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

"Can the Lead Member tell us how much funding was cut from grants to Newham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets as part of the coalition government's £6bn in public sector cuts compared with the authorities which cover David Cameron, George Osborne and Eric Pickles' constituencies?"

7.23 Question from Councillor Lesley Pavitt to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Abdal Ullah

“Can the Lead Member tell us what the Council are doing to ensure a safer community over the summer?”

7.24 Question from Councillor Alibor Choudhury to the Lead Member for Housing, Heritage and Planning, Councillor Marc Francis

“What additional powers can the Council obtain to deal with the problems of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO’s)?”

7.25 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin to the Lead Member for Regeneration and Employment, Councillor Sirajul Islam

“What are HM Treasury's predictions of job losses as a result of the coalition government's first Budget and what will be the likely effect on residents of Tower Hamlets?”

7.26 Question from Councillor Rabina Khan to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

“Does the Lead Member think that an increase in the rate of VAT is a regressive or progressive tax rise and what will be the likely impact on residents in Tower Hamlets when it is introduced?”

7.27 Question from Councillor Shelina Akhtar to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor David Edgar

“What are the likely effects of the coalition government's plans to make £11bn in cuts to Welfare including cutting housing benefit, tax credits, Disability Living Allowance and freeze Child Benefit on residents in Tower Hamlets?”

7.28 Question from Councillor Oliur Rahman to the Lead Member for Regeneration and Employment, Councillor Sirajul Islam

“Can the Lead Member tell us when work will begin on the regeneration of the Ocean Estate and what changes it will bring about for residents?”

7.29 Question from Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Shiria Khatun

“Can the Lead Member tell us the key findings of the Children and Young Persons Plan Annual Review 2009/10?”

7.30 Question from Councillor Rania Khan to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joshua Peck

“How has the composition of the Council changed following May’s elections?”

7.31 Question from Councillor Abdul Asad to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Rachael Saunders

“Can the Lead Member tell us the likely impact of the Council’s new Single Equality Framework for 2010/11?”

7.32 Question from Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed to the Lead Member for Environment, Councillor Shahed Ali

“Can the Lead Member tell us what plans the Council has to tackle graffiti and litter as well as any other environmental improvements over next few months?”