

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012**

**PETITIONS**

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

**SUMMARY**

1. The Council's Constitution provides for up to three petitions to be received at each Council Meeting. These are taken in order of receipt. This report sets out the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
2. The deadline for receipt of petitions for this meeting is noon on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September. However, at the time of agenda despatch the maximum number of petitions has already been received as set out overleaf.
3. A further petition is included that was submitted for the 11<sup>th</sup> July Council meeting but not presented at that meeting due to time factors.
4. In each case the petitioners may address the meeting for no more than three minutes. Members may then question the petitioners for a further four minutes. Finally, the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair of Committee may respond to the petition for up to three minutes.
5. 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.
6. Members should confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

**5.1 Petition regarding 'Attack on Bengali as a mother tongue teaching-learning at Langdon Park Secondary School' (Petition from Ms Nahida Rahid, Ms Hayley Ali and others) – petition deferred from the Council Meeting on 11th July 2012.**

Text of petition: "We would like to draw your attention to our serious concern on the issue of our children's Bengali language learning at Langdon Park Secondary School. With regret we find that the school administration has been trying to marginalise Bengali learning by discouraging the children to choose Bengali as an MFL subject of learning. The time-table of the school has been one of the factors for children to opt-out for subjects other than Bengali. The permanent Bengali teacher has been marginalised and put in a situation so that she goes for early retirement. The entire scenario has become one that can be considered as an institutional attack on Bengali as a mother tongue teaching.

You know as well as we know that the teaching of Bengali should be made available at any cost in a school where 90% children come from families where home-language is Bengali. Opportunity for learning our mother tongue Bengali is not only our right and entitlement but also an instrument for our socio-cultural emancipation. We cannot keep quiet when such a plot has been matured through the direct support of the head teacher of the school.

May we therefore request you to please intervene into the situation and order for a independent investigation so that teaching-learning of Bengali at Langdon Park Secondary School can be resumed in full sewing in the interest of safeguarding the entitlement of our children to learn their mother tongue and achieve higher in the future career.

We look forward to your kind action and hearing from you soon."

**5.2 Petition against a waste transfer station in Ailsa Street, Poplar (Petition from Mr John Baker and signed by approximately 1,000 persons)**

Text of petition: "A Single 'Waste Transfer Station in Poplar' for the whole of Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets wants to put a 'Waste Transfer Station' on a prime riverside site in Poplar. The aim is to deal with up to 300,000 tonnes of rubbish every year which will require 200 lorries a day travelling through Poplar. We think there is a better use for this prime riverside site. If you agree:-

SAY NO to dumping on Poplar

SAY YES to looking at an alternative more appropriate use for this riverside site and a better approach to waste management."

### **5.3 Petition regarding the Boishaki Mela** (Petition from Mr Golam Mohammed Chowdhury, Betar Bangla and others)

Text of petition: “We, the undersigned people of Tower Hamlets, individually and collectively want you to look into the matter of the recent Boishaki Mela. The mela has attracted negative publicity due to various controversies in local, national and international press and electronic media. We therefore ask you to take the necessary steps so that confidence is restored in the local community for next year’s mela:-

- The organiser of the Boishaki mela has to date not opened the account for public scrutiny. As taxpayers and stakeholders, the expenditure and earnings of the mela must be transparent and open to public scrutiny
- The fraudulent human trafficking from Bangladesh must be stopped. We believe this involves the exploitation of vulnerable people who invest their income to unscrupulous agents to come to the UK under false pretensions
- The Boishaki mela is an important event for the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets and beyond. We believe that the mela will be further enriched with the participation of local artists and performers.”

### **5.4 Petition regarding Millwall Park** (petition from Ms Kathy McTasney and others)

Text of petition: “We, the undersigned, would like to draw the Mayor’s attention to the current risks of anti-social behaviour after dark around Millwall Park and the surrounding area.

We believe that this area currently poses a hazard to local residents at night, and that this problem could be alleviated by the installation of targeted lighting or similar crime prevention initiatives.

We call on the Mayor to take this up as a matter of urgency.”