

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2012

**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 the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 19th September 2012.
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 Speaker 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

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

8.1 Question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

What steps did the Mayor take to promote Curry Capital during the Olympics? What was the total budget allocated to promoting Curry Capital and Brick Lane and will the Mayor provide a breakdown of what this budget was spent on?

8.2 Question from Councillor David Snowden

Regarding the borough's mobile phone 'App' entitled 'Paths To Gold', seemingly produced by an outfit called Captive Minds on behalf of Tower Hamlets Council, may I please be informed:

A) Whether this application was in fact written by Tower Hamlets, and if so, who authorised expenditure on it?

B) How much was spent on this 'App'? Please detail both in house and out of house costs, and who the contractors were.

C) What was the rationale for developing it?

D) What benefits are expected to accrue to Tower Hamlets Council or the Borough more widely?

E) Was this 'App' linked to a payment of £54,000 by the Communications Team for Software to Captive Minds Communications Group in May 2012, as published on the Tower Hamlets website: [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqsl/800001-800100/800043 transparency/payments to suppliers-1.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqsl/800001-800100/800043%20transparency/payments%20to%20suppliers-1.aspx) If this payment is not linked to this 'App', what was it for?

8.3 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs

How does the Mayor plan to fill the budget deficit in the medium term financial plan, with tax rises or service cuts? When will he outline these plans?

8.4 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah

Would the Mayor agree with me that the decision by the UKBA to peremptorily withdraw the licence for London Metropolitan University, a university at which many Tower Hamlets residents have received and continue to receive higher education, to register international students places in jeopardy thousands of bona fide international students who have paid tens of thousands of pounds for their education here and jeopardises the very future of London Met which has specialised

in broadening access to higher education for those from less privileged backgrounds and that the government should reverse this decision and would he agree to write to the Education Secretary and the Prime Minister urgently to convey the profound concern here in Tower Hamlets over this decision by UKBA?

8.5 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam

What was the average cost per home for the Decent Homes work undertaken in the borough each year between 2008 and 2012?

8.6 Question from Councillor Craig Aston

At the last Council Meeting a question was asked regarding the current occupiers of the old Poplar Town Hall, 117 Poplar High Street. The response was that the building was unoccupied. Will the Mayor explain his relationship to the so called Barbican College who were and are occupiers of the old Poplar Town Hall?

8.7 Question from Councillor Amy Whitelock

Can the Mayor/lead member advise on what action the council is taking to tackle child sexual exploitation in the borough? What systems are in place to monitor the number of young people at risk of sexual exploitation, and what support is available to children who suffer this horrific abuse?

8.8 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

Would the Mayor agree with me that the current process of interviewing for the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) by employees of ATOS places those suffering mental health conditions at a very substantial disadvantage and that this is adversely affecting a significant number of Tower Hamlets residents and would he agree to write to the relevant ministers urgently to ask them to instruct or legislate to require independent medical evidence to be sought at an early stage in the WCA process?

8.9 Question from Councillor Ann Jackson

What is the current situation with One Housing? The Mayors decision was made urgently on this issue which came to cabinet on 25th July and thus disallowing a call-in to Overview and Scrutiny.

Have the Mayor and Director now verified these reasons with one housing, primarily that the bank foreclosure on major loans was imminent and forced the finalisation by Tower Hamlets of assignation of pension rights by the 31st July?

8.10 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

Would the Mayor provide details to the Council of the dates and times of the invitations that were sent out regarding the thanks to the Armed Forces event on Sunday 13 August?

8.11 Question from Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed

How many flower beds in the borough have been grassed over due to budget cuts and how much is this estimated to have saved?

8.12 Question from Councillor Maium Miah

How will the mayor ensure that the legacy from the Olympic Games continues to benefit Tower Hamlets for years to come?

8.13 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders

We have been told that youth service provision will not change once services are taken out of community management and into Mulberry Place. Please itemise all youth services sessions and activities that have been run over the last year, where they were run, (venue, ward and LAP) and how many young people attended, broken down by race and gender. Please itemise all qualifications achieved, broken down by contractor, LAP, race, gender. Please also publish data covering the last 5 years. Please circulate in advance of the meeting due to detail required?

8.14 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel

Can the Cherie please tell us if he is looking forward to his Duke by the electorate in 2014?

8.15 Question from Councillor Md Abdul Mukit

What specific steps has the Mayor taken to reduce the excessive noise, anti-social behaviour and public urination which takes place outside bars on and around Brick Lane. This anti-social behaviour is a significant concern to residents who live in the area and one we have raised with the Mayor many times before. When will he act?

8.16 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan

Can the Mayor update us how successful Live Site was during the Olympics and his plans for the post Olympics clean up?

8.17 Question from Councillor John Pierce

How many Tower Hamlets Homes Board meetings has Cllr Rania Khan attended since being appointed in December 2011?

8.18 Question from Councillor Tim Archer

How many library books are currently over one month overdue. How many were borrowed by someone living outside the Borough. How many books are so overdue that they have been "written off" over the past year? How many were borrowed by someone living outside the Borough?

8.19 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum

Why was there lower than expected footfall for local traders during the Olympic Games?

8.20 Question from Councillor Dr Emma Jones

Do this year's GCSE results in Tower Hamlets show improvements in science subjects?

8.21 Question from Councillor Zara Davis

In the light of the significant volume of incidents during the Olympics that were dealt with by the Council's Noise Nuisance team, would the Mayor consider permanently reverting to a seven day a week Noise Nuisance service?