

Mayor's Report to Council 5th December 2016

John Biggs, Mayor of Tower Hamlets

It has, as always, been a busy time. As we conclude consultation on our new organisation structure, and the proposals for a three year budget near publication, a greater clarity is emerging on the future priorities and direction of travel for the Council.

Our thoughts are with the family, and friends, of Nasar Ahmed, the Bow School student who tragically passed away recently. We will doubtless discuss this at tonight's meeting.

And we were all shocked to hear of the death of Melanie Clay, our Corporate Director of Law Probity & Governance. Melanie had been sick for a while but we were receiving reports of her gradual recovery and anticipating her return. Our thoughts are with her family.

It has been announced that Aman Dalvi is retiring next Spring, as our Director of Development & Renewal. I have known Aman for over a decade and have greatly valued his counsel and support, particularly but not just following my election as Mayor.

We have received proposals for a reduction in the Directions imposed on us under the previous Mayoral administration, and a reduction in the number of Commissioners.

October saw the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street and I was proud to be able to speak on behalf of local people at this important commemoration.

As a civic duty, I recently had the pleasure of meeting Prince Edward at a celebration of the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. More recently still attended the awards ceremony of the 31 (Tower Hamlets) Air Training Corps Squadron. Both events reinforced in me the pride I feel in our young people.

Can I finally welcome our newest Councillor, Shafi Ahmed. Two of our Councillors – Marc and Rachel – have become parents for the second time, for which congratulations. Another announcement, we hope, is imminent.

Key Events/Announcements

Nasar Ahmed The tragic death of Nasar Ahmed following a medical emergency at Bow School has caused understandable concern. As Mayor I have met the family twice, and promised to visit again as the need arises. I attended funeral prayers at East London Mosque, together with local MP Jim Fitzpatrick. I held a number of other meetings and briefings, and made a brief statement. I have promised the family to ensure, as far as it is within my powers, that all questions and concerns are properly answered, and lessons learnt. I also want to acknowledge the support from friends, community groups and other Councillors in supporting the family and providing community reassurance.

There was understandable concern, with many feeling worried and with widespread speculation about the causes and lessons to be learnt. The

proper investigation of events needs to be managed by the coroner's service, with proper investigation and the right questions asked. I am reassured that the family are legally represented, in order that their concerns can be presented and examined.

As far as community confidence is concerned, I am reassured by the steps taken by our Children's Services staff and others. While these are necessarily subsidiary to all proper investigations, they have been intended to reassure. They include the involvement of OFSTED and advice to all schools. Additionally, Barts Health NHS Trust are undertaking inquiries as required in the circumstances of an unexpected child death and the Local Safeguarding Children Board will consider following the investigation whether a Serious Case Review is warranted. Council officers have also been liaising with school health providers on updating guidance for schools, focusing on ensuring students who are attending school are getting appropriate support.

Budget Work has continued with thinking about next year's budget, and the need to protect services while making savings. We are publishing proposals to take us through the next three years on December 19th. There will be a full debate in the New Year. It will be a challenging budget but I believe we have found a way to make the unavoidable savings while minimising the impact on local people. I am pledging to protect local people as best I can from the ravages of Government Cuts, particularly to the most vulnerable.

Commissioners: I have received a letter on behalf of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government advising of his intention to reduce the number of directions, and the number of Commissioners. In addition, the Council is to resume Grants making powers, although with oversight from the Commissioners. I will be meeting the Secretary of State to discuss these changes further. It is fair to say that the Government does not appear as reassured as I would like that our changes are embedded and our culture has changed. The conduct of members remains, in my view, a concern. As regards historic complaints, the 'Clear Up' Team' deadline, by which complaints must be lodged, is 8th December.

Youth Services: A report on the Youth Services Review is going to Cabinet in January. It will lead to proposals and a consultation during the early part of next year.

Housing Strategy: This has now been agreed at Cabinet following lengthy and helpful period of consultation, and I hope will be formally agreed by Council this evening.

Local Plan: The Local Plan consultation closes on 2nd January and I would urge residents to examine the proposals and comment.

Old Flo: Arrangements to return Old Flo to our borough are making headway – we have invited partners to bid to host her, and I will update members on progress as it is made.

Election Petitioners: Following the last Council meeting, I wrote to the Prime Minister about the election petitioners and their costs. I received a reply from a Junior Minister, which I can provide to members, or inquisitive members of the public. In essence this asks us to wait for the Government's response to the Pickles Report, at a future unspecified date.

Cabinet and Mayoral Decisions: Cabinet has met twice since my last report and considered a number of matters, with decisions published on the Council's website. In addition, Mayoral Decisions have been signed on:

- Middlesex Street
- Tower Hamlets and Canary Wharf FE Education Trust Appointments
- Draped Seated Woman – process for relocation to Tower Hamlets

Engagements and Meetings: 22 September 2016 – 5 December 2016

- 22 September 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr John Pierce
 - Executive Committee meeting
- 23 September 2016
 - Meeting with partners re. Tower Hill
- 26 September 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Shiria Khatun
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Constituent
 - Stand up to Racism event
 - Probashi Balagoni-Osmani Nagar Adarsha Upozila Shomity Awards Ceremony.
 - Home Visit
- 27 September 2016
 - Interview for Housing Launch event
 - Canary Wharf Group and Isle of Dog Forum meeting
 - Meeting with Officers re. Commercial Events in Parks
 - Meeting with Constituent
 - Meeting with Commissioners
 - Dashghar Union Progoti Trust UK Ceremony
 - Tower Hamlets Cricket Club and London Tigers Cricket Awards Evening
- 28 September 2016
 - Interview for East End Citizen
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachel Blake
 - Meeting with Officers re. Communications
 - Road Safety meeting
 - Meeting with Constituent
 - Meeting with Officers re. Bow.Bromley-by-Bow School sites
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Children's Services
 - Meeting with Officers re. Air Quality
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Tower Hamlets College Student Achievement Awards
- 29 September 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - LLDC Board Meeting
 - Mayor's Surgery
 - The Wharf Innovation in Business Awards
- 30 September 2016

- Meeting with Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs
 - Meeting with Officers re. Mansard Roofs
 - Meeting with London Metropolitan University
 - Meeting with Officers re. CLC Budget Savings
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Resources
- 01 October 2016
 - LBTH Housing Conference
 - Memorial Service for Zdenek Marak
 - Excel Tutors' GCSE and A Level Awards
- 02 October 2016
 - Space event
- 03 October 2018
 - Meeting with Jim Fitzpatrick MP
 - Meet the Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG) Champions
 - Meeting with Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Meeting with Developers
 - Meeting with Officers re. Budget Consultation
 - Resident Meeting with SPLASH
- 04 October 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Older People's Day Celebration
 - Cabinet
 - King Georges Field Charity Board
 - Cable Street 80th Anniversary event
 - 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street
 - Dinner Reception for Chairman of Prabashi Govindogonj
- 05 October 2016
 - Meeting with Somali Senior Citizens Club
 - Quarterly Best Value Review Board
 - Meeting with Commissioners
 - Meeting with Officers re. Free Schools
 - Meeting with Cllr Asma Begum
- 06 October 2016
 - Tour of HQS Wellington
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Mayor's Surgery
 - Dinner reception with Cratus Communications
- 08 October 2016
 - Inventors Club Awards Ceremony
- 09 October 2016
 - Battle of Cable Street event
 - London Jewish Forum – Cable Street Anniversary event
 - Sanaton Association Durga Puja
- 10 October 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Cllr Shiria Khatun
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Meeting with Officers re Highways

- Launch of the Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy
- Durga Puja

- 11 October 2016
 - London Council Leaders Committee
 - Hate Crime Champions event
 - Emergency TMG meeting
 - Meeting with Bangladesh Solicitors Association
- 12 October 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re Charging
 - St Luke's CoE 150th Anniversary Celebration
 - Women's Health & Family Services Celebratory Event
 - Meeting with Officers re. Poplar Mosque
 - Avebury Estate Walkabout
- 13 October 2016
 - Home Visit
 - Meeting with Interim Chief Executive of Tower Hamlets Community Housing
 - Meeting with Officers re. Video on Social Media
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Children's Services
 - Meeting with Interim Corporate Director, Law, Probity and Governance
 - Blackwell Reach Phase 1B Launch & Community Facility opening
 - Mayor's Surgery
 - Meeting with residents of Kiln Court and Oast Court
- 14 October 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Resources
 - Meeting with Officers re. ASB
 - Mowlem Primary School and Marion Richardson Primary School visit to Mulberry Place
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachel Blake
 - Visit to Stepney Shahjalal Mosque & Cultural Centre
 - Meeting with Rushanara Ali MP
- 16 October 2016
 - JBBET GCSE/A-level Award Ceremony 2016
 - Culloden Bangladesh Parents Association Eid Gathering
- 17 October 2016
 - Meeting with GMB Branch Secretary
 - Meeting with Officers re. Draft Local Plan for Cabinet
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Meeting with Officers re. Cricket Pitch at Tower Hamlets
 - Meeting with Officers re. Old Flo
 - Bangladesh Football Association UK 20th Annual Awards Ceremony 2016
- 18 October 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Planning
 - People's Choice Awards – Victoria Park – Photo Opportunity

- Meeting with Executive Director of Circle Housing
- Budget Meeting
- Meeting with Cllr Rachael Saunders
- 19 October 2016
 - Meeting with Commissioner, Sir Ken Knight
 - Meeting with Officers re. Keen Students
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Barts NHS Trust
 - Best Value Programme Review Board Quarterly Meeting
- 20 October 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Mayor's Housing Meeting
 - Meeting with Officers re. Estate Capacity Report
 - Meeting with Cllr Khales Uddin Ahmed
 - Meeting with Officers
 - 20mph Road Safety Roadshow
 - Mayor's Surgery
- 24 October 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Denise Jones
 - Meeting with Cllr Shiria Khatun
 - Meeting with Cllr Abjol Miah
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Meeting with Officers re. Community Language Service
 - Executive Committee
- 25 October 2016
 - LLDC Board Meeting
 - Meeting with Cllr Rajib Ahmed and Cllr Shiria Khatun
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachael Saunders and Cllr David Edgar
 - Meeting with Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs and Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Meeting with Cllr Clare Harrison
 - Meeting with Cllr Helal Uddin and Cllr Danny Hassell
- 26 October 2016
 - Site Visit to Roche House
 - Meeting with Friends of Bow
 - Isle of Dogs Site Visit Tour
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with ATN Bangla
 - Meeting with Cllr David Edgar
 - Visit to Weekly Potrika Office
- 27 October 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr John Pierce
 - Meeting with Chief Executive and East End Community Foundation
 - Meeting with Cllr Asma Begum
 - Meeting with Cllr Dave Chesterton
 - LBTH and THCCG Leadership meeting
 - Meeting with Officer re. Local Plan
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Children's Services

- Mayor's Surgery
- 28 October 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs
 - Meeting with Cllr Abdul Chunu Mukit
 - Meeting with Cllr Sabina Akhtar
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Resources
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachel Blake
 - Quarterly Portfolio Review meeting – Cllr Rachel Blake
- 29 October 2016
 - Altab Ali Park Rally against police brutality
- 30 October 2016
 - Brick Lane Curry/Food Festival
 - Derai Thana Development Organisation Education Achievement Ceremony
 - Sanaton Association Diwali event
 - Gurdwara Sikh Sangat Sikh Temple Diwali event
- 31 October 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Tower Hill
 - Meeting with Affinity Sutton
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Old Ford
 - Governance Review Working Group
- 01 November 2016
 - Meeting with Citizen UK
 - Meeting with Commissioners
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Cabinet/CMT Budget meeting
 - Cabinet
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachael Saunders
- 02 November 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re Neighbourhood Planning and Roman Road
 - Meeting with Service Head, Public Realm
 - Landlord Licensing Photo Opportunity
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Officers re. South Dock Bridges
- 03 November 2016
 - Budget Stakeholder Summit
 - London Property Summit meeting
 - Meeting with Chief Executive of East End Homes
 - Mayor's Surgery
- 06 November 2016
 - Firework in Victoria Park
- 07 November 2016
 - Meeting with Jim Fitzpatrick MP
 - Meeting with Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Meeting with Officers re. Kemnal Park
 - Quarterly Portfolio Review meeting – Cllr Shiria Khatun
 - Stepney Shahjalal Mosque and Culture Centre Ceremonial event

- Meeting with Cllr Ayas Miah
- Meeting with Chief Executive
- Meeting with Officers re. Isle of Dogs Highways issues
- 08 November 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Best Value Board
 - Quarterly Portfolio Review meeting – Cllr Joshua Peck
 - Meeting with Partners re. South Dock Footbridge
 - Meeting with Deputy Chair for Transport for London
 - Commissioners’ Decision Making Meeting
 - Opening of London City Island
- 09 November 2016
 - Birkbeck College Fellowship Graduation Ceremony
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Adults’ Services
 - Meeting Chief Executive
 - Visit to GrowTH Homeless Night Shelter
- 10 November 2016
 - London Property Summit 2016
 - Diamond Anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
 - Meeting with Officers re. Draft Local Plan
 - Mayor’s Surgery
- 11 November 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs
 - Quarterly Portfolio Review – Cllr Amy Whitelock Gibbs
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Resources
 - Armistice Day event
 - Meeting with Mayor’s Casework Co-ordinator
 - Meeting with Service Head for Culture Learning and Leisure
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Children’s Services
 - Meeting with Officers re. Silvertown
 - THEOs and Mayor – Photo Opportunity
 - Rainbow Film Society Awards Ceremony
- 12 November 2016
 - HRF Office Opening
- 13 November 2016
 - Remembrance Day Services
 - Janakalyan Trust (Jogonnathpur) event
- 14 November 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Officers re. Blackwall Way
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Budget Scrutiny
- 15 November 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Planning
 - Meeting with Commissioner, Sir Ken Knight
 - Home Visit
 - Meeting with Officers re. Budget Next Step and Growth Bids
 - Interview with Channel S
 - Quarterly Portfolio Review – Cllr Rachael Saunders
- 16 November 2016

- Meeting with Headteacher of St Paul's Way
- Meeting with Officer re. ASB
- Meeting with Officers and Docklands Community Organisation
- Meeting with Independent Police Complaints Commission
- Interview with dissertation student
- Interview with NTV
- 17 November 2016
 - Visit to Woolmore Primary School
 - Meet with students of George Green School
 - Meeting with Drug & Alcohol Action Team Co-ordinator
 - Meeting with Officers re. Civic Centre
 - Home Visit
 - Mayor's Surgery
- 18 November 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - London Councils Meeting
- 20 November 2016
 - UKBCCI Inaugural Business & Entrepreneur Excellence Awards 2016 and Gala Dinner
- 21 November 2016
 - Meeting with Chief Executive for Tower Hamlets Community Housing
 - Meeting with Greater London Authority Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
- 22 November 2016
 - Meeting with Cllr Harun Miah
 - Central London Forward Board Meeting
 - Meeting with Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Meeting with Officers re. Watney Market
 - LLDC Board Meeting
- 23 November 2016
 - Meeting with the Chief Executive of Canary Wharf Group
 - Meeting with Assistant Police Commissioner
 - Meeting with Officer
 - Meeting with Cllr Marc Francis
- 24 November 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Statutory and Non-Statutory Notices
 - Meeting with Cllr Asma Begum
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Officers re Budget
 - Meeting with Officers re. Tower Hamlets Clear Up Project
 - Meeting with Interim Corporate Director, Law, Probity and Governance
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Children's Services
 - Meeting with constituent
 - Mayor's Surgery
- 25 November 2016
 - Meeting with Officers re. Island Health Trust

- Meeting with Corporate Director, Resources
- Meeting with Officers re. Stepney FC
- Central London Forward meeting
- Sardar Mosque Opening
- Meeting with London City Airport
- 27 November 2016
 - Bangladesh Caterers Associations (BCA) Award & Annual Dinner
- 28 November 2016
 - Meeting with Island Health Trust
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Christmas Card Competition – Choosing the winner
 - Meeting with Officers re. Parking Permit Transfer Scheme
 - Meeting with Officers re. Budget Update
- 29 November 2016
 - Meeting with East End Community Foundation, Metropolitan Police and Poplar Harca
 - Meeting with BT Group
 - Healthy Lives Health Lunch School event
 - Meeting with Cllr Sirajul Islam
 - Meeting with London Suburban Taxi Coalition
 - Meeting with Cllr Rachael Saunders
 - 25th Birthday Celebration Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership
- 30 November 2016
 - Citizenship Ceremony
 - Meeting with Borough Commander
 - Pre Infrastructure Delivery Board Meeting
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Officers re. Driffield Road and Medway Conservation Areas
 - Rohingya Genocide event
 - Visit to Bangla Post Office
- 01 December 2016
 - Whitechapel By-election
- 02 December 2016
 - Air Cadets awards Ceremony
- 03 December 2016
 - REAL's Event
- 04 December 2016
 - British Bangla Chess Tournament
 - Christmas Light Switch On
- 05 December 2016
 - Barnardo's Memorial Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
 - Christmas Card Competition – Winners Reception
 - Meeting with Chief Executive
 - Meeting with Corporate Director, Development and Renewal Council