



Meeting of the

Tower Hamlets Council

Supplemental Agenda

Wednesday, 15 March 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

VENUE

Council Chamber,
Whitechapel Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road,
London E1 1BJ

Further information about this meeting is available in the main agenda.

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London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Council



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Wednesday, 15 March 2023

7.00 p.m.

15. URGENT MOTION FOR DEBATE

An urgent motion for debate tabled at the meeting.



Agenda Item 15

Urgent Motion Accepted for Debate at Council

Proposed by Councillor: Saied Ahmed

Seconded by Councillor: Maium Talukdar

This Council notes:

- The tragic death of Mizanur Rahman in a housefire at 18 Maddocks House, Tarling West Estate, Shadwell, and the serious injuries sustained by several others.
- That the property was licensed as an ‘additional House in Multiple Occupation’ (HMO) with a declared occupancy of 3 individuals from two households, managed by Tower Hamlets Homes (THH), the Council’s Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO).
- That at least 16 people were living in the house, with several bunkbeds in one room, representing a serious breach of the license agreement.
- That many of those in living in the house were low-paid workers.
- That resident complaints had been received as early as September 2021.
- That emergency hotel accommodation has been provided to 17 people along with a weekly allowance and welfare support and housing advice, and that at the request of Mayor Lutfur Rahman, this accommodation will be extended to cover the entire period of Ramadan.
- That while the flat leasehold is owned by a private landlord, the freehold is owned by the council with Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) managing the communal area.
- That in his *Manifesto*, Mayor Lutfur Rahman called for a ‘fix [to] the landlord registration scheme to ensure it delivers on its purpose of driving up standards in the private sector, including landlord rent disclosure’
- That this is also reflected in the Council’s *Strategic Action Plan*, which states that the Council will ‘work with social and private landlords to encourage them to improve the conditions of the homes they let and the service they provide to their tenants’
- That the Mayor’s Office and Officers have already begun work on how the Council can strengthen Registered Social Landlord (RSL) accountability and the Council’s ability to respond to complaints from residents concerning issues regarding over-occupation and license breaches.

- That in October, the Mayor commissioned a consultation to strengthen licensing and regulation of private landlords to safeguard tenants' rights.

This Council believes:

- This tragedy represents an abuse of the most socially and economically vulnerable residents and workers by a greedy, vulturous and predatory class of landlord.
- That an investigation should be called to establish the reasons for this incident, and to identify any failures that contributed to it.
- That a full investigation should also be launched.
- That the urgent work already underway concerning the enhanced monitoring and targeting of rogue landlords and the needs of vulnerable residents needs to be accelerated to prevent such tragedies from recurring.

This Council resolves:

- That all members should support the Mayor's call for a investigation into this incident.
- That the Council should identify where possible any potential failings that contributed to this tragedy.
- That the Council should be fully cooperative with any potential criminal investigation.