

Meeting of the



Tower Hamlets Council

Supplemental Agenda

Wednesday, 19 July 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.

Democratic Services Contact:

Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services

Tel: 020 7364 4651, E-mail: matthew.mannion@towerhamlets.gov.uk



London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Council



Supplemental Agenda

Wednesday, 19 July 2023

7.00 p.m.

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 7. | ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE
Amendment to motion | 3 - 6 |
| 8. | OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE
Amendment to motion | 7 - 10 |
| 11. | TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
Corrected question | 11 - 12 |
| 12. | TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
Amendments to motions | 13 - 20 |



ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE – ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE – MOTION ON YOUNG TOWER HAMLETS

Proposed by: Cllr Maium Talukdar
Seconded by: Cllr Bodrul Choudhury

Amendment proposed by: Cllr Sabina Akhtar
Seconded by: Cllr Mohammad Chowdhury

This Council notes:

- That Mayor Lutfur Rahman, in his previous term as Mayor, oversaw a huge investment of resources into the borough's youth services – taking young people off the street, giving them educational, cultural, recreational, wellbeing and employment opportunities, and preparing them for adult life.
- ~~The chronic cuts to, neglect and underfunding of, Tower Hamlets' youth services during the terms of the previous administration, which resulted in the closure of 70% of all youth centres and attendant services in the borough. And insert:~~

The previous administration built wealth, knowledge and skills in the community by partnering with the voluntary and community sector to deliver youth services. As they have a track record of delivering high quality youth provision.

Insert: That this council's own studies demonstrated that when communities are empowered, they provide efficient, effective, and economical youth services.

Tower Hamlets Youth Service (Commissioned Provision) 3 Year Performance									
	2017/18			2018/2019			2019/2020		
	Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved	
		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Contacts	2779	3914	140.84%	4180	4723	112.99%	2505	5108	203.91%
Participants	1646	1676	101.82%	2598	2277	87.64%	1503	2394	159.28%
Recorded Outcome	991	1092	110.19%	1600	1462	91.38%	902	1416	156.98%
Accredited Outcome	494	499	101.05%	847	546	64.46%	451	519	115.08%

Tower Hamlets Youth Service (In-house Provision) 3 Year Performance									
	2017/18			2018/2019			2019/2020		
	Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved	
		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Contacts	6,040	2,564	42.45%	5740	2948	51.36%	3835	2648	69.05%
Participants	3624	1119	30.88%	3444	1355	39.34%	2301	1579	68.62%
Recorded Outcome	2174	417	19.18%	2066	350	16.94%	1381	1008	73.01%
Accredited Outcome	1087	322	29.62%	1033	401	38.82%	690	621	89.96%

- That various studies – (set out below) – outline the correlation between access (or lack thereof) to youth services for young people and increased levels of crime and ASB, as well as low educational attainment and decreased job opportunities.

Links to External Reports/Websites

Social Mobility Commission 2019:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf

APPG on Knife Crime and Violence Reduction: *Securing a brighter future: The role of youth services in tackling knife crime*, 2020

<http://www.preventknifecrime.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Securing-a-brighter-future-the-role-of-youth-services-in-tackling-knife-crime-v.2.pdf>

ONS 2021 – Child Poverty and Education Outcomes by Ethnicity

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/uksectoraccounts/compendium/economicreview/february2020/childpovertyandeducationoutcomesbyethnicity>

- That this latter point is particularly true in the youngest and most densely-populated borough in the country, where green space is scarce for many communities.
- That children from lower income households often have worse educational outcomes. A 2021 report found that those children from poorer households and without access to a decent education and extra-curricular activities end up with significant gaps in academic achievement – especially those from BAME backgrounds.
- ~~That young people in Tower Hamlets have suffered because of the previous administration's cuts.~~ **Insert: Under the previous administration Tower Hamlets had one of the best funded youth services in London and managed to secure more than £1m of funding from the GLA's MyEnds programme to combat youth violence on the Isle of Dogs.**

This Council believes:

- That the young people of Tower Hamlets deserve the best opportunities to excel, both inside and outside of the classroom.
- ~~That every ward in Tower Hamlets should have a dedicated youth centre, where children and young people can access services to help them develop skills, as well as their interests and aspirations.~~
- ~~That a serious (re-)investment in capital, personnel, and infrastructure is required to deliver these ambitions.~~
- **And insert: Modern youth services are most effective when they are delivered through strategically located centres equipped with state-of-the-art facilities to engage and support out young people.**

- That youth work is an essential and under recognised profession. Professionally trained youth workers are experts in their field and know what's best when it comes to delivering youth services.
- That the launch of the Mayor's *Young Tower Hamlets (YTH)* scheme earlier this week (Monday 17th July) – in which a £13.7million per annum investment in the borough's redesigned youth service and a guaranteed youth centre in every ward were showcased – represents a drastic change in the Council's approach, and a firm commitment to the future of the borough's young people.
- That this investment will provide jobs, intern and apprenticeship opportunities for young people across the borough.
- That this investment will also help tackle inequalities faced by disabled and SEN young people in the borough; it will also provide women and girls with increased safe access to sporting, educational, and cultural services previously cut.
- That the work of the Deputy Mayor and Council Officers should be particularly recognised in helping to deliver this key Mayoral priority.
- That this scheme represents the insourcing of another key service in the borough, enhancing democratic accountability and control, and symbolising a key step in accelerating education and attainment in Tower Hamlets.
- That an overcentralised youth service is an inefficient way of delivering youth services and has previously led to poor governance and malpractice occurring in the borough.

This Council resolves:

- To approve and endorse the Mayor and Council's newly launched service, *Young Tower Hamlets*, and recognise the huge benefits it will have on the borough's young people and families.
- To commend Officers and the Lead Member for their work in delivering this project.
- To support officers in the delivery of this key service moving forward.
- That every youth worker employed by the borough undergoes a full DBS check before being employed by the borough.
- To only recruit professional youth workers to staff our service.
- To request that the lead member explore the creation of a youth worker training fund to be delivered by our partners in the FE/HE sector.

This page is intentionally left blank

Amended Motion on Women's Safety

Proposed by Cllr Abu Talha Chowdhury

Seconded by: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

Additions in Bold

Deletions ~~struckthrough~~

This Council notes:

- That many women and girls in Tower Hamlets face harassment, assault and violence in public and private spaces, which affects their freedom, dignity and wellbeing.
- That Tower Hamlets has very high levels of domestic abuse and sexual offences reported to the police, as well as 14 domestic homicides since 2011.
- In Tower Hamlets on average 6000 Domestic abuse incidents reported to the police each year.
- Last year 2,082 sexual offences were reported, of that 1348 were non rape offences and 734 rape offences.
- That improving women's safety is the responsibility of everyone, especially men, and requires more action from the Council and its partners.
- **That for some time now the council's service offer around women's safety has been far too limited, and that this lack has only been exacerbated by austerity measures occurring over the last 7 years such as the closing of the Jagonari centre.**
- **That the mayor Lutfur Rahman acknowledges these historic failings and has already demonstrated a commitment to reversing trends of service cutting by identifying new funding options for crucial VAWG services such as our women's criminal justice pathway coordinator role and investing community safety resources in a new series of ground-breaking digital women's safety walks.**
- **That the mayor has taken personal responsibility for the development of a new VAWG strategy being produced for 2024, which under the direct oversight of the newly hired Women and Equalities Officer, is intended to set a new standard for direct government intervention in issues of violence against women and girls.**

This Council resolves to:

- Launch a public advertising campaign to raise awareness and challenge violence against women and girls, and to communicate the Council's commitment to women's safety using council communications and the public relations departments of partner agencies. The campaign should also promote positive messages about consent, respect and healthy relationships, and encourage bystander intervention. **This**

campaign will also focus on intersectionality in women's safety, prioritising the needs of LGBTQI women, BAME women, and women involved in sex work and/or sexual exploitation in line with the mayor's equalities priorities.

- Strengthen the enforcement partnership between the Council, the Police and other agencies, and use innovative anti-social behaviour legislation to fine individuals who harass and cat-call women on our streets. The partnership should also work to improve the reporting, investigation and prosecution of domestic abuse and sexual offences, and provide specialist training for frontline staff.
- **Support the work being done to build a mayor's anti-crime task force that will strive to build specialisation around VAWG and women's safety issues into our local enforcement service, while also increasing the capacity of our THEO service to respond to issues of street harassment and abuse more generally.**
- **Continue to** increase the visibility and effectiveness of CCTV cameras across the borough **following the massive upgrade of our CCTV cameras and control overseen by the mayor.**
- Ensure that CCTV operators monitor lone individuals, particularly women, during the night and early hours of the morning. The Council should also **continue and expand its** use of other technologies, such as street lighting, alarms and apps, to enhance women's safety in public spaces. **The council should also continue to build on the successes of the mayor's recently rolled out women's safety walks and expand the use of resident consultation in shaping street patrols and CCTV placement.**
- Organise women's safety community meetings to connect residents with the Council and the Police, and to address their concerns and suggestions on how to improve women's safety in Tower Hamlets. **These meeting will be built out of the digital women's safety walks that were rolled out this spring.** The meetings should also provide opportunities for women and girls to share their experiences, access support services and participate in co-designing solutions.
- **Support the development of upcoming Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and facilitate a wide-ranging consultation process that will ensure the new strategy is first and foremost based around the needs of women across the borough and from a wide variety of different racial, religious, economic, and sexual identity-based backgrounds.**
- **Reverse/mitigate the impact of the closure of the Jagonari centre by making the development of new BAME women's centre capable of providing a variety of resources around VAWG advocacy and support a top priority.**
- **Reassess the way that this borough supports women involved in sex work and victims of sexual exploitation. The council will begin this process by committing to the recommendations of the off street sex work action plan and scoping the feasibility of both a sex workers hostel and a prostitution needs assessment.**

- Ensure that transgender women in particular are properly served by our VAWG strategy and by the variety of VAWG women's safety services offered by the council. Trans women continue to be victims of sexual violence and hate crime at an alarmingly high rate, and yet Tower Hamlets has historically done almost nothing to support this marginalised. The council will therefore work to embed the needs of this community across the council and into our VAWG services in particular.

This page is intentionally left blank

Corrected Question

11.28 Question from Councillor Sabina Khan

Could the lead member provide me the number of students that were excluded from school for the 22-23 year and a breakdown of how long it took before those students found a new school placement?

This page is intentionally left blank

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 12.2 – ASPIRE

Proposer: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

Seconded: tbc

12.2 Public Pay Gap

Research from across civil society, including the GMB union shows that there is an Ethnicity Pay Gap, between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic worker and non-Black Asian and Minority Ethnic workers who are otherwise equal in educational attainment. This is not only reflected in the pay of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers, but this disparity is also apparent in the promotion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers in the workplace.

This council notes that:

- GMB Race, the union's self-organised groups in London, sent out a survey to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic London workers to collect information about their Pay, Terms and Conditions. GMB Race's survey results, while disappointing, unsurprisingly show the fact that only half of respondents thought they received equal treatment and access to bonuses, overtime, pension, and other plus payments compared to non-BAME staff.
- The TUC's own research shows that the Ethnicity Pay Gap for minority workers has shown that students who entered the workplace after GCSE are paid 11% less than their white counterparts. Whilst those who attained degrees, the pay gap more than doubled to 23%. The race pay gap impacts the standard of living of those affected and also worsens for people who have aspired and succeeded in further education.
- The Resolution Foundation has shown that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers lose out on £3.2bn a year in wages compared to white workers. It found Pakistani and Bangladeshi male graduates earned an average £2.67 an hour (12%) less, while among female graduates, black women faced the biggest pay penalty, of £1.62 an hour (9%).
- The general reporting of the pay gap is poor and recent figures show so far only 3% of employers with over 250 employees are voluntarily reporting their ethnicity pay gap.
- The Government has acknowledged this weakness and that Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting should be mandatory. However, this has not happened.
- The Women's and Equalities Committee's (WESC) report Ethnicity Pay Gap in February 2022 recommended that the Government should introduce mandatory ethnicity pay gap reporting by April 2023. This should be for all organisations that currently report for gender and that legislation should include the requirement for employers to publish a supporting narrative and action plan.
- This call has been echoed by the TUC.

This council believes that:

- All members of society should be equally able to flourish in work. Therefore there should be no glass ceiling because of the colour of someone's skin. Pay, promotions, career development and progression and bonuses in all sectors should be underpinned by ability and fairness. This is vital in eradicating systemic racism and division in wider society and a cause acutely relevant to the diverse community in this borough.
- With a cost-of-living crisis hitting households hard, the diminishing earnings of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers will disproportionately push many of such workers further into work poverty.
- All public bodies should be committed to being open and transparent about publishing its data on employees, whilst running fair, open and inclusive promotion strategies within its public sector duties. Such public data is the first step in creating awareness of the ethnicity pay gap with a view to drive change.
- Other employers across all sectors should do the same and that there should be mandatory reporting of the Ethnicity Pay Gap for all employers with 250 or more staff members.

This council resolves to:

- Adopt GMB Race's campaign for an Ethnicity Pay Gap, including:
- Agree to annually report on the Ethnicity Pay Gap within its own organisation;
- Endeavour to regularly analyse strengths and weakness based on its own reporting, devising and implementing annual plans to proactively put in place **measures** to ensure there are no bars to recruitment, training, salary levels or promotion, **including local schemes to give opportunities for ethnic staff to achieve promotion and occupy more senior positions within the Council**;
- Work with **the three recognised Councils unions** locally and adopt GMB Race campaigns Ethnicity Pay Gap Charter;
- Work with council suppliers, contractors and partners to seek to do the same encouraging best practice through procurement rules as relevant, **including in the contracting of any new services**; and
- Call upon the Government to introduce mandatory pay gap reporting

Resources Briefing

Tower Hamlets Council has reported its ethnicity pay gap every year since 2018, as part of its Gender Pay Gap Report. The reports can be found here - [Gender pay gap \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](https://towerhamlets.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap-reports).

The council's ethnicity pay gap has been reducing year on year but closing it is a priority for the council. In 2023 the gap is 8.20%, a reduction from 15.66% in 2018.

The 2023 report not only shows the ethnicity pay gap but also provides information on the average hourly rates of the different race strands. The council's Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy and Action Plan includes a section on pay gaps and specifically on work to close the ethnicity pay gap.

Actions related to addressing the ethnicity pay gap include:

- Analysing disaggregated data so we understand the specific gaps faced by each ethnic group
- Engaging a Data Analyst to undertake more detailed analysis of the data, including the intersectionality between protected characteristics
- Model targeted actions to address the ethnicity pay gap and analyse their potential impact
- Deliver targeted actions to close the ethnicity pay gap
- Engage stakeholders, including the Trade Unions and staff networks in this work

In addition, equality data across areas such as recruitment, promotion, training etc is gathered and analysed on an annual basis and any actions determined to address any bars.

Another key part of the Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy and Action Plan covers representation in the workforce as a whole and at a senior level, in terms of protected characteristics so we have a workforce that reflects, at all levels, the diversity of the borough population. As well as a corporate action plan, there are separate directorate actions plans and targets being developed to help achieve this aim.

As reporting on the ethnicity pay gap is not a mandatory requirement, we would struggle to enforce/govern its implementation within the supply chain. Should Tower Hamlets enforce such measures through the tender process i.e. suppliers must sign up to reporting or their bid is not considered, it may limit the number of bids it receives. However, this initiative is one which is ethical and certainly one which Tower Hamlets supports. Therefore, what we can do, is encourage suppliers to do the same by promoting the initiative within our Invitation to Tender documents, although we would stop short of governing whether suppliers are reporting on the ethnicity pay gap.

This page is intentionally left blank

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 12.3 – ASPIRE

Proposer: Cllr Abdul Mannan

Seconder: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

ADDITIONS BOLD

DELETIONS STRUCKTHROUGH

12.3 Tower Hamlets Community Housing

This Council notes:

- THCH was founded by stock transfers from LBTH and for many years delivered high-quality housing management as well as the regeneration of estates and community development;
- THCH was recently downgraded to a G3 and V3-rating by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) for both governance and financial viability;
- It has become apparent that the RSH might be encouraging THCH to be taken over by another housing association;
- The RSH has a very poor track record in enforcing mergers and doesn't proactively take any account of residents' views.
- **That the Mayor has agreed to host a session with the Housing Ombudsman on RSL performance on how to address their issues.**
- **That this Mayor has facilitated dialogue between THCH and their residents, which should lead to an addressing of these issues and concerns raised.**

This Council believes:

- THCH tenants and leaseholders deserve a much better service than they have been getting from their landlord for several years;
- LBTH has an ongoing obligation to residents living on those estates transferred to ensure the promises made by are delivered consistently;
- Enforced mergers of local stock transfer housing associations have sometimes resulted in residents receiving an even worse service from the social landlord they join;
- The views of tenants and leaseholders in the future of their housing association should be paramount in any decision by the Board of THCH and the RSH.

This Council resolves:

- ~~To call on the Mayor to make representations to the Regulator for Social Housing calling for the views of residents of THCH to be formally sought prior to a decision on any merger;~~
- To support the Mayor's commitment to meet with the Housing Ombudsman in October and to insist that all Councillors attend to prevent the failings of the previous seven years from repeating themselves.
- To empower residents and TRAs in the decision making and consultative processes of RSL management, to ensure that tenants rights are strengthened and reflected more firmly in the Council's engagement with RSLs.
- To call on the Mayor to instruct council officers to urgently undertake a feasibility on the financial and practical implications of requesting a return of THCH stock to LBTH.

Place Briefing

Upon being downgraded, and with a view of shoring up financial viability for its stock, THCH were advised by the Regulator of Social Housing to merge with a larger landlord – potentially one with a large volume of stock and large balance sheet.

Currently Poplar HARCA and THCH are conducting surveys on their websites seeking resident's views on the proposed merger as well an FAQ section to help alleviate residents' concerns.

Additionally, the council has prepared a statement for publishing which notifies residents of the council's stance on the potential merger, and that we firmly encourage affected residents to participate in the survey/s.

In relation to stock transfer, officers and the Mayor have sought external legal counsel on the documents and have established the following:

- There are no provisions in the transfer documentation that require THCH to offer the property back to LBTH, nor do we have first right of refusal.
- The council cannot prevent the merger taking place as during the stock transfer, the council relinquished those rights.
- In terms of the stock condition and debt, this depends on the particular route that is taken. As a general matter of principle (only), the 'new' provider takes on the debt subject to financial liabilities etc.
- There are no statutory consultation requirements. However, the consent of secured creditors under the general law would probably be necessary, and the Regulator has also indicated that it will, in practice, consult interested parties including tenants and local authorities.

Notwithstanding the above, the council wants to ensure promises made to improve stock condition and governance by the new landlord are upheld. To this end, officers are working with the Mayor to put in place a range of steps to ensure residents are empowered to hold

their landlords to account when things go wrong, and when issues remain unresolved, that they have a direct line to bodies with regulatory and enforcement powers.

In relation to THCH in particular the council will continue to inform and update residents of the appropriate channels such as the Housing Ombudsman service and Regulator of Social Housing should they face problems post-merger. Nevertheless, the council will endeavour to consistently monitor the situation ensuring residents are not left worse off and all landlords operating owning stock in the borough uphold the highest level of transparency and governance at all times.

This page is intentionally left blank