

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.10 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2019

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

During the meeting the Council agreed to vary the order of business. To aid clarity, the Decision Sheet is presented in the order that the items originally appeared on the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Kevin Brady
- Councillor Dipa Das
-

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The following Councillors declared a Non - Disclosable Pecuniary interest that the Council has decided should be registered in agenda items.

Councillor Asma Begum - agenda item 12.4, Motion on London City Airport. This was on the basis that Councillor Begum was an Authority appointed Member of the London City Airport Consultative Committee.

Councillor Asma Islam - agenda item 12.4, Motion on London City Airport. This was on the basis that Councillor Islam was a Trustee of the London City Airport Fund

Councillor Denise Jones - agenda item 9.2, A Member Question regarding the Wapping London Dock secondary school. This was on the basis that she was a Mulberry Schools Trust-Trustee.

Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan - agenda item 5.4, Petition regarding the Community Hall known as the Canal Club, Waterloo Gardens, E2 9HP. This was on the basis that Councillor Salva Macallan resided on the Wellington Estate and was the Chair of the Wellington Estate Tenants Association

The following Councillors declared a Non - Disclosable Pecuniary in agenda items 9.7, 9.10 and 9.12, Member Questions regarding the Whitechapel Bell Foundry on the grounds that they were Members of the Council's Strategic/Development Committee:

- Councillor Mufeedah Bustin
- Councillor Rabina Khan

- Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE
- Councillor John Pierce
- Councillor Leema Qureshi
- Councillor Dan Tomlinson

3. MINUTES

DECISION:

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 17 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and the Speaker be authorised to sign them accordingly.

4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Please see the minutes.

5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

5.1 Petition regarding Single Use Plastics

Ciaran Cusack and others addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and responded to questions from Members. Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Environment then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Place, for a written response within 28 days.

(**Action by:** Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place).

5.2 Petition regarding parking on school markings at Arnhem Wharf Primary School

Pupils from the primary school addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and responded to questions from Members. Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Environment then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Place, for a written response within 28 days.

(**Action by:** Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place).

5.3 Petition regarding Stop the Lorries on Pennington Street

Aimee Charalambous addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and responded to questions from Members. Mayor John Biggs then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Place, for a written response within 28 days.

5.4 Petition regarding the Community Hall known as the Canal Club, Waterloo Gardens, E2 9HP

Dwight James and others addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and responded to questions from Members. Councillor Rachel Blake, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning, Air Quality and Tackling Poverty then responded to the matters raised in the petition.

DECISION

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Place, for a written response within 28 days.

PETITIONS TO BE NOTED

5.5 Petition regarding Glyphosate – Herbicide

1. That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director Place, for a written response within 28 days.

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor presented his report to the Council. Following which:

- Councillor Andrew Wood, Leader of the Conservative Group, responded briefly to the Mayor's report.
- The Mayor responded briefly to the Leader of the Conservative Group

7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE

7 – Administration Motion regarding the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) funding crisis

Councillor Danny Hassell **moved** and Councillor Sufia Alam **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda.

Following debate, the motion was put to a vote and was **agreed**.

This Council notes:

1. There are around 8,000 children and young people in Tower Hamlets who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or are attending alternative provision. 3,000 children and young people have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP);
2. Demand for SEND services is increasing rapidly and services are also responding to more complex needs. Over the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 we saw a 48% increase in the number of children with an EHCP;
3. Last year Tower Hamlets received £49.7m from the Government for SEND funding, but it spent more than £56m on services;
4. The funding from Government has failed to keep pace with rapidly increasing costs, leaving big gaps in budgets;
5. This crisis is replicated across London, where the total in-year shortfall for 2017/18 across SEND services came to £77 million and the cumulative overspend on the high needs block is higher in London than in any other region;
6. Analysis from the National Education Union shows that had funding kept pace with rising numbers and increased in line with inflation, the budget gap would almost be eliminated. However as things stand, the Local Government Association estimates that councils in England face a SEND funding gap of up to £1.6 billion by 2021;
7. The council has responded to the Government's 'call for evidence' on high needs funding and the Mayor and Cabinet Member have written directly to the Prime Minister on this issue.
8. That Tower Hamlets Council organised a cross-party letter from council cabinet members across London with responsibility for children's services to the Secretary of State for Education calling for an end to the funding crisis in SEND services.
9. The recent announcement from the Government pledging additional funding for schools, including £700m for children with SEND.

This Council believes:

1. We face a national crisis in high needs funding, but this crisis is hitting London harder than anywhere else in the country;
2. We have now reached a tipping point: whilst in previous years many councils have been able to meet the gap from reserves or underspending on other education budgets, as other education budgets tighten this is no longer an option. Deficits will now become

- cumulative, rolling over into the next year and the pressure on high needs funding will rise exponentially;
3. The Government is failing to fund SEND services properly and it's falling to local councils to plug the gaps;
 4. That while the additional £700m is very welcome, it doesn't even cover the gap we already face now, nor will it fill the SEND funding gap estimated by the LGA at £1.6bn by 2021.
 5. Children and young people with special needs and disabilities are some of the most vulnerable in our society and it's vital that the services that support them are funded fairly and properly;
 6. Funding cuts to general school budgets are threatening the ability of our local schools to maintain their levels of quality, inclusive education.

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the Government to urgently invest in our SEND services and ensure that Government funding keeps pace with rising demand, complexity of need and additional responsibilities;
2. To call on the Mayor and Cabinet Member to write to the Secretary of State for Education with a copy of this motion, welcoming the additional funding, but urging him to invest further to bring an end to the SEND funding crisis;
3. To continue to work with school leaders, trade unions and parents to campaign against schools cuts.

(**Action by:** Debbie Jones, Corporate Director, Children and Culture/Mayor's Office)

8. OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE

8 – Opposition Motion by the Conservative Group regarding the Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2019

Councillor Andrew Wood **moved** and Councillor Peter Golds **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Asma Begum **moved** and Mayor John Biggs **seconded** the following amendment to the motion to be debated.

Added text underlined and in red font.

Deleted text scored out.

This Council notes:

- The recent publication of the Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2019
- A news update on the Council website titled "Residents survey results revealed" released on Tuesday 3rd September *which correctly stated that:*

'Nearly eight out of ten Tower Hamlets residents (78 per cent) continue to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together, are positive about most local services, and 69 per cent say that the council is doing a good job.'

- Commitments made at the 19th September 2018 full Council meeting as regards anti-social behaviour & crime in Tower Hamlets

~~Summary Table 1 page 4 Residents Survey 2019 – Service satisfaction ratings (%) – all residents and all users (N.B. table deleted for reasons of accuracy)~~

	2016	2019	Change 2019 on 2016	Change 2019 on 2019%		
Views of all residents, total % (not including nursery education)	925	879	-46	-5%		
	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change 2019 on 2016	Change 2019 on 2019%
Views of all service-users, total %	651	635	603	546	-105	-16%

Figure 4: Views about the area, cohesion and influencing decisions (%) in Tower Hamlets, 2012 to 2019

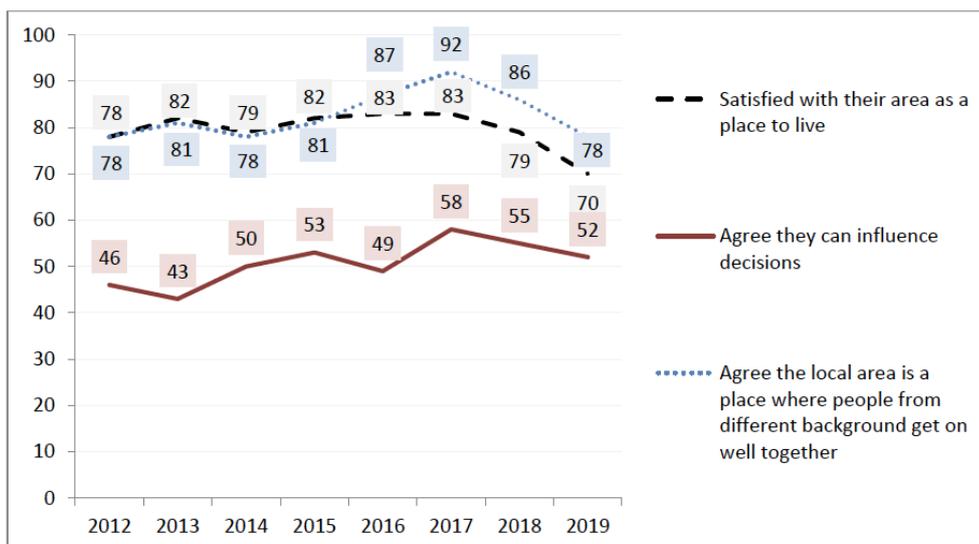
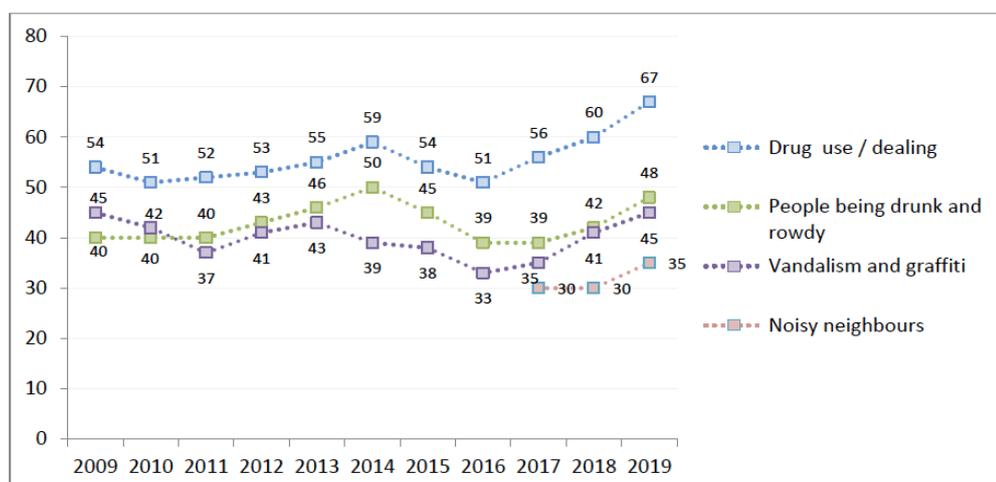


Figure 5: Views about ASB in Tower Hamlets, 2009 to 2019

This Council notes that Crime and ASB are major concerns for residents. Many elements of this are for other agencies and partners to address and it would be foolhardy for the Council to accept ownership of matters beyond our powers or control but we note the ongoing work by the Council and partners to address issues of community safety, including but not limited to:

- £3 million investment of council funding for extra police officers to work on key crime and ASB hotspots;
- A Neighbourhood Management Pilot in the north east of the borough to bring extra focus and dedicated resource to four wards in the borough with high concentrations of ASB;
- Ongoing targeted activity with the police to tackle the drugs trade through 'Operation Continuum' which has seen 312 arrests for drug offences, 129 people charged with drug supply and £564k cash seized under proceeds of crime;
- A review of the Council's CCTV infrastructure as a prelude to major investment in the network;
- Refreshing the Substance Misuse Strategy to ensure it reflects the current/emerging challenges and sustaining £8 million investment on substance misuse support.

The Council is concerned:

About the year-on-year That while some areas have seen an improvement in resident perceptions (for example in parks and road/pavement repairs), there has been a decline in resident's perception about a range of other issues and concerns (for example refuse collection but also other areas not a responsibility of the council including policing).

The Council further notes:

That the news release dated 3rd September 2019 titled "Residents survey results revealed" ~~does not mention any of the issues raised above and is not an accurate summary of the survey results~~ highlighted a number of key issues and provided a link to the survey report in full.

That the council is working towards meeting the commitments & promises made at full Council on the 19th September 2018 as regards ASB have not been fully answered including for example a new CCTV approach for the borough, completing a review of the online ASB reporting portal, 6,000 lamp columns have been upgraded to LED lanterns, among other measures.

The Council resolves:

To ~~reverse the year on year declines~~ address the concerns and build on improvements to address in the issues raised in the Annual Residents Survey, and to strive to deliver ~~rebuild trust in our ability to deliver~~ continuing improvements for our residents.

To continue to ensure that press releases accurately ~~summarise Councils documents and are not a Pravda like distortion of the truth~~ reflect the work of the council and inform the media and residents.

To ask the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to ~~respond urgently to all of the issues raised and commitments made 364 days ago.~~ provide a written update on ongoing actions following the agreement of the full council motion in September 2018.

The amendment was put to the vote and **agreed.**

Following debate, the motion as amended was put to the vote and was **agreed.**

DECISION:**This Council notes:**

The recent publication of the Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2019

A news update on the Council website titled "Residents survey results revealed" released on Tuesday 3rd September *which correctly stated that:*

'Nearly eight out of ten Tower Hamlets residents (78 per cent) continue to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together, are positive about most local services, and 69 per cent say that the council is doing a good job.'

Commitments made at the 19th September 2018 full Council meeting as regards anti-social behaviour & crime in Tower Hamlets

Figure 4: Views about the area, cohesion and influencing decisions (%) in Tower Hamlets, 2012 to 2019

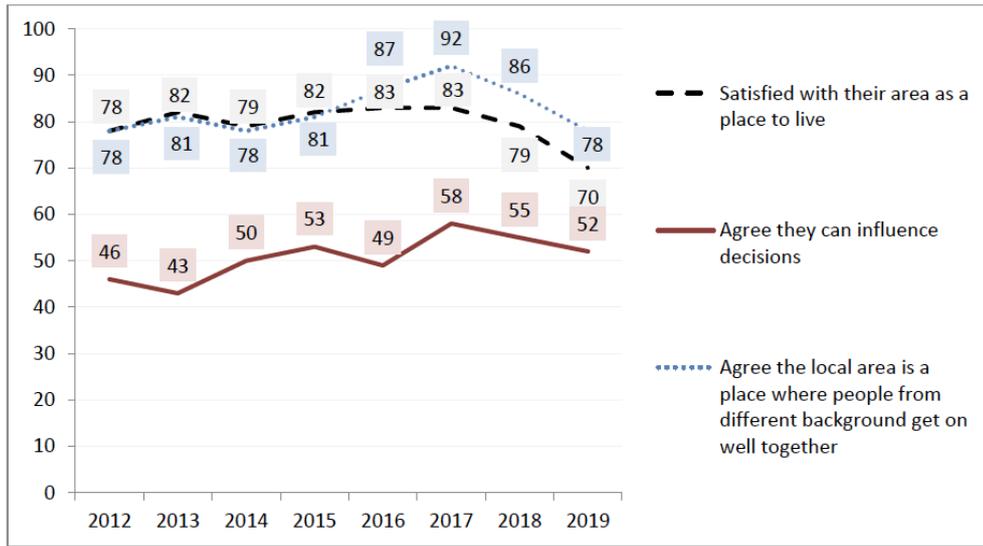
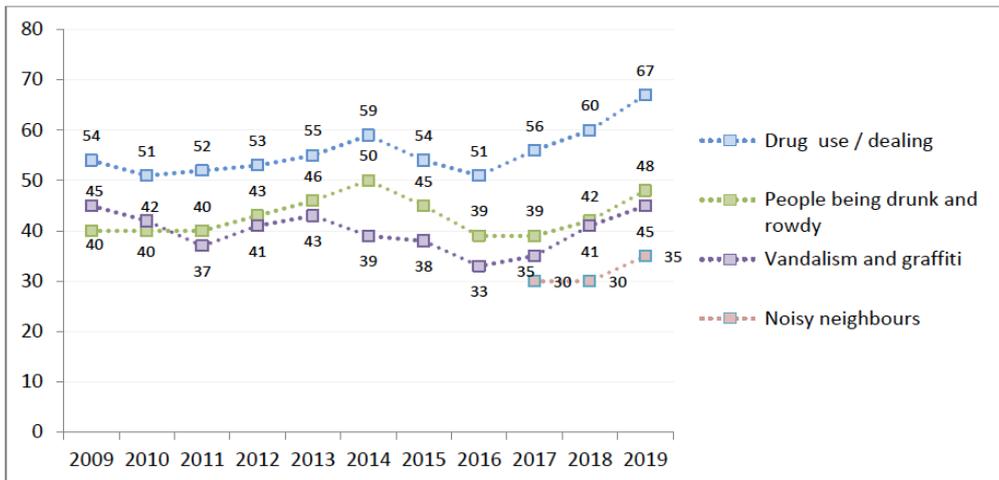


Figure 5: Views about ASB in Tower Hamlets, 2009 to 2019



This Council notes that Crime and ASB are major concerns for residents. Many elements of this are for other agencies and partners to address and it would be foolhardy for the Council to accept ownership of matters beyond our powers or control but we note the ongoing work by the Council and partners to address issues of community safety, including but not limited to:

- £3 million investment of council funding for extra police officers to work on key crime and ASB hotspots;
- A Neighbourhood Management Pilot in the north east of the borough to bring extra focus and dedicated resource to four wards in the borough with high concentrations of ASB;
- Ongoing targeted activity with the police to tackle the drugs trade through ‘Operation Continuum’ which has seen 312 arrests for drug

offences, 129 people charged with drug supply and £564k cash seized under proceeds of crime;

- *A review of the Council's CCTV infrastructure as a prelude to major investment in the network;*
- *Refreshing the Substance Misuse Strategy to ensure it reflects the current/emerging challenges and sustaining £8 million investment on substance misuse support.*

The Council is concerned:

That while some areas have seen an improvement in resident perceptions (for example in parks and road/pavement repairs), there has been a decline in resident's perception about other issues and concerns (for example refuse collection but also other areas not a responsibility of the council including policing).

The Council further notes:

That the news release dated 3rd September 2019 titled "Residents survey results revealed" highlighted a number of key issues and provided a link to the survey report in full.

That the council is working towards meeting the commitments & promises made at full Council on the 19th September 2018 including for example a new CCTV approach for the borough, completing a review of the online ASB reporting portal, 6,000 lamp columns have been upgraded to LED lanterns, among other measures.

The Council resolves:

To address the concerns and build on improvements to address the issues raised in the Annual Residents Survey, and to strive to deliver continuing improvements for our residents.

To continue to ensure that press releases accurately reflect the work of the council and inform the media and residents.

To ask the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to provide a written update on ongoing actions following the agreement of the full council motion in September 2018.

(Action by: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director (Governance) & Monitoring Officer/Denise Radley, Corporate Director (Health, Adults and Community))

9. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

The following questions and in each case supplementary questions were put (except where indicated) and were responded to by the Mayor or relevant Executive Member.

9.1 Question from Councillor Tarik Khan requesting an update on the Council's summer programme.

9.2 Question from Councillor Andrew Wood seeking information on the new Wapping London Dock secondary school.

9.3 Question from Councillor Kyrsten Perry requesting an update on recent A-level and GCSE results. (No supplementary question was asked).

9.4 Question from Councillor Peter Golds regarding staff matters.

9.5 Question from Councillor Marc Francis about progress with OH assessments.

9.6 Question from Councillor Mufedah Bustin regarding children's services improvements. (No supplementary question was asked)

9.7 Question from Councillor Ehtasham Haque requesting that the Council commit to a Compulsory Purchase Order to preserve the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

9.8 Question from Councillor Val Whitehead requesting an update on the tackling holiday hunger programme.(No supplementary question was asked)

9.9 Question from Councillor Dan Tomlinson seeking assurances regarding the extension of parking permit times. (No supplementary question was asked)

9.10 Question from Councillor Shad Chowdhury regarding initiatives to preserve historic buildings such as the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. (No supplementary question was asked)

9.11 Question from Councillor Asma Islam regarding the Council's National Democracy Week programme. (No supplementary question was asked)

9.12 Question from Councillor Puru Miah about the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to preserve the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

9.13 Question from Councillor Rabina Khan about the establishment of a serious case review on the school pupils who left for Syria. (No supplementary question was asked)

9.14 Question from Councillor Harun Miah about the roll out of the new smart bins initiative across the Borough (No supplementary question was asked)

10. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

There were no reports.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Due to time constraints, the Council agreed to move straight to the vote on Motions 12.1, 12.2, 12.3 and 12.5.

12.1 Motion regarding regarding cyberbullying and e-safety

The motion was put to the vote without debate and was **agreed**.

DECISION:

This Council Notes:

1. Bullying and cyberbullying are two of the most serious issues facing children's and young people's lives.
2. Research undertaken by the NSPCC has found:
 - a. almost 1 in 4 of 8 to 11-year-olds and 3 in 4 of 12 to 15-year-olds has a social media profile;
 - b. 1 in 3 internet users are children;
 - c. 1 in 4 children have experienced something upsetting on a social networking site;
 - d. around 1 in 8 young people have been bullied on social media;
 - e. 3 in 4 parents have looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks;
 - f. almost 1 in 4 young people have come across racist or hate messages online; and
 - g. there were over 2,200 counselling sessions with young people who talked to Childline about online sexual abuse online in 2017/18
3. There are many forms of cyber-bullying including harassment, denigration, flaming, impersonation, outing and trickery, cyber-stalking, exclusion, bullying by spreading rumours and gossip, threatening behaviour, blackmail and grooming.
4. Some of the triggers found in young victims include; low self-esteem, withdrawal from social activities, changes in appearance, weight loss, depression and even self-harm.
5. It is currently impossible to know how many children are reporting content, what they are reporting and how these reports are dealt with.
6. The recommendation of the Children's Commissioner to establish a Children's Digital Ombudsman to media between under 18s and social media companies over the removal of content.

7. That parents, educators, and counsellors across UK are responding to this behaviour with new and innovative approaches.
8. Here in Tower Hamlets the council's Parental Engagement Team has developed workshops and courses which explore internet safety. More than 200 parents and carers have attended a course or workshop delivered in school and community settings in 2018 – 19. The PET has also recruited and trained 8 Safer Families Champions to promote key safeguarding messages to families.
9. Digital inclusion, including e-safety for young people is a strand in the Local Community Fund.

This Council Believes:

1. The impact of cyber-bullying and exposure to other inappropriate content online is a threat to a child's safety and wellbeing and if they are not handled swiftly it can cause long-term psychological damage that can affect everything from their personal relationships to their performance in school.
2. That in a digital age, the internet has significant advantages for young people future but that the disadvantages should not out weight the advantages.
3. Enabling children and young people to use technology safely is also about tackling wider issues related to safeguarding, such as reducing exposure to violent and other inappropriate content.
4. That the Tower Hamlets schools that have developed cyber bullying policies and advocated safe online policies, including comprehensive reporting procedures, are to be congratulated and supported.

This Council Resolves:

1. To annually recognise the third Friday in June as the international 'Stop Cyberbullying Day' and to use this to raise awareness, working with organisations including the Cybersmile Foundation.
2. To use the council's website and other communication channels, including through the youth services and Young WorkPath to promote organisations and services available that offer support to young people suffering from cyberbullying.
3. To support local schools to strengthen their own policies on cyberbullying and their reporting procedures for both teachers and young people.
4. To continue to support and strengthen our work with parents so they are empowered to support young people to stay safe online.
5. To support the proposal from the Children's Commissioner to establish a Children's Digital Ombudsman.

(Action by: Debbie Jones, Corporate Director, Children and Culture/Neville Murton, Corporate Director, Resources)

12.2 Motion regarding Transport in Tower Hamlets

The motion was put to the vote without a debate and was **defeated**.

12.3 Motion regarding Improving diversity and inclusion in Tower Hamlets

The motion was put to the vote without a debate and was **agreed**.

DECISION:

Tower Hamlets is a rich and diverse borough. The 2018 election increased the diversity of our elected representatives, by gender and by ethnicity, further reflecting the make-up of our borough.

This council notes:

1. Diverse teams provide great benefits. This includes at a senior level where the knowledge, skills and experiences of people from different backgrounds is vital: complex challenges require multi-faceted solutions.
2. Diversity alone does not achieve success. Meaningful diversity, not tokenism, should be the aim. Inclusion creates a culture of openness and opportunity; diversity is an indicator of the success of inclusion programmes.
3. There are many barriers to inclusion and often organisational and societal structures will unintentionally prevent the progression of under-represented groups.

This council further notes:

1. That diversity in senior management across local government nationally leaves much to be desired. According to the Local Government Leadership report produced by Green Park in October 2018 only two of London's 32 Boroughs have BAME CEOs. Progress has been made in the representation of BAME people at Top 20 level in London Boroughs with an increase of 5.6% in 2017 to 10.5% in 2018. Local authorities outside London average about 3%.
2. That the gender pay gap and the underrepresentation of women needs to be properly addressed; a significant gap still exists across the UK.
3. Research from the Fawcett Society highlights that of the council seats across the country that were up for election in 2018, 38% went to women, up just 3 percentage points on 2014 when these seats were last contested.
4. Improving diversity and inclusion takes time. Best practice factors include:
 - a. Delivering training to decision makers and across the organisation
 - b. Recruitment adverts that look for a range of experiences, not those traditionally filled by white men.

- c. Recruitment processes e.g. gender-neutral job ads; skills/competencies over experiences; blind CVs; diverse recruitment panels;
 - d. Mentoring/coaching/training for talented individuals
 - e. Promotion opportunities including safe environments for individuals to learn new skills and experiences
5. Tower Hamlets Council publishes data on the gender pay gap, as well as data in relation to the pay gap for other protected characteristics: BAME staff; staff with disabilities; and LGBT staff.

This council recognises the efforts made by this council to improve inclusion. However, we acknowledge that leadership roles across London and across our council and partners in the community often lacks the diversity that we wish to see. In 2019, we need to see a bigger step change.

This council wishes to see the same requirement extended to partners and suppliers where there is no statutory impediment.

This council believes we should be encouraging our local government colleagues across London, and our partners and community groups locally to improve inclusion by having senior management teams that reflect the diversity of our borough and city. This council welcomes the addition of a question asking about the existence and effectiveness of applicants' diversity and inclusion policies in the Local Community Fund application. This council wishes to see a movement towards a model where such an improvement in inclusion becomes a key consideration in appointments and funding (where there is no statutory impediment in doing so).

This council resolves:

1. To annually request a range of inclusion statistics from partner organisations and funded community groups, with a focus on how inclusion is to be improved at a leadership level. The intention initially is that this signals the importance of inclusion to the borough. The level and detail should vary depending on the size of the group.
2. To produce a plan to make diversity and inclusion key decision factors (focusing on senior management) in appointing suppliers and issuing grants. The plan should cover the medium-long term and consider how this can be achieved in line with procurement rules.
3. To lead by example and review the council's own recruitment processes and development & training programmes to improve diversity and inclusion at a senior management level.
4. To require any headhunters/recruitment consultants to demonstrate how they will address diversity during the recruitment process and demonstrate how they address diversity in their own organisation.
5. To call on the Mayor of Tower Hamlets in his role at London Councils to push for the establishment of development programmes for BAME senior managers in London Local Government in order to address the current under-representation at senior level.
6. That the above should be reflected in the annual equalities workforce monitoring report action plan where applicable.

(**Action by:** Asmat Hussain Corporate Director (Governance) & Monitoring Officer/Neville Murton, Corporate Director, Resources)

12.4 Motion regarding London City Airport

Councillor Val Whitehead **moved** and Councillor Ehtasham Haque **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda.

Following debate the motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

Tower Hamlets Council recognises the high impact of any increase in air traffic on carbon emissions and also on the lives of those who live in the flight path or will lose their homes to airport expansion. Following our earlier recognition of a Climate Emergency we therefore oppose the expansion proposals at Heathrow and the proposed increase in the number of flights allowed at City Airport and any extension to its hours of operation.

As an eco-friendly alternative to increased flights, Tower Hamlets residents have easy access to multiple railway stations and we believe the government should work to increase access and decrease the cost of rail travel for all.

We also believe that the concentration of flight paths from City Airport in 2016, which has a disproportionate effect on those affected, is unfair and should be reversed.

The council must ensure that it submits a formal response to the London City Airport Master Plan 2020-2035 consultation, including a copy of this motion in the response, and ensuring that residents are engaged in the consultation process.

(**Action by:** Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place).

12.5 Motion regarding a Serious Case Review of Radicalisation of Bethnal Green Academy Schoolgirls.

The motion was put to the vote without debate and was **defeated**.

The meeting ended at 10.30 p.m.