

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL****HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2020****THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG****Members Present:**

Mayor John Biggs	Councillor James King
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	Councillor Eve McQuillan
Councillor Rajib Ahmed	Councillor Ayas Miah
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	Councillor Puru Miah
Councillor Amina Ali	Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE
Councillor Shah Ameen	Councillor Victoria Obaze
Councillor Asma Begum	Councillor Mohammed Pappu
Councillor Rachel Blake	Councillor Kyrsten Perry
Councillor Kevin Brady	Councillor John Pierce
Councillor Kahar Chowdhury	Councillor Leema Qureshi
Councillor Dipa Das	Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor Candida Ronald
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan
Councillor Ehtasham Haque	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Danny Hassell	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Mohammed Ahabab Hossain	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Asma Islam	Councillor Val Whitehead
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Bex White
Councillor Rabina Khan	Councillor Andrew Wood
Councillor Tarik Khan	

During the meeting, the Council agreed to vary the order of business to consider an Urgent Motion (item 13.1), regarding the Covid-19 virus following the consideration of the Petitions (item 5). To aid clarity, the Minutes are presented in the order that the items originally appeared on the agenda.

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Victoria Obaze in the Chair

The Speaker of the Council provided an update of her activities since the previous Council meeting. Looking forward to International Women's Day, she reported that she was pleased to have attended a number of events to celebrate women and their achievements.

She also reported that she had attended a number of other important events. These included:

- Commemoration events. This included the Mayor of London's Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony at City Hall and the Martyr's Day Event in Altab Ali Park.

- Visiting a local school to discuss knife crime.
- A visit to the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja in Nigeria, at the invitation of by His Royal Highness, Esu Bwari.
- A visit to the Nigerian High Commission in London.
- Citizenship ceremonies, community events and civic receptions.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Sufia Alam
- Councillor Shad Chowdhury
- Councillor Marc Francis
- Councillor Denise Jones
- Councillor Harun Miah and
- Councillor Dan Tomlinson

It was also noted that Councillor Mufeedah Bustin was on maternity leave.

Apologies for lateness were also received on behalf of Councillor Eve McQuillan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Standards Advisory Committee on 30 January 2020 agreed a general dispensation to all Councillors in respect of NJC pay.

Members did not therefore have to declare a DPI in respect of agenda items in respect of pay.

Councillor Motin Uz – Zaman declared a Non - Disclosable Pecuniary interest that the Council has decided should be registered in agenda item 5.3, Petition requesting Tower Hamlets Council take urgent action on air pollution

This was on the basis that:

- He was an employee of New City College (Hackney);
- That the students speaking on the Petition attended the college.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 15 January 2020 and the Budget Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19 February 2020 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

The Chief Executive provided an update on the following:

- That Jennifer Peters, the new Divisional Director of Planning and Building Control, started with the Council on 24th February 2020.
- That progress had been made with the recruitment of a new Corporate Director for Children and Culture.
- The Borough had 4 confirmed cases of Covid-19, (as at 10 March 2020). As a result of this, Tower Hamlets had evoked the multi-agency pre pandemic plan that was managed by the local resilience forum.
- In relation to strike action, the Council were monitoring the situation with Veolia Waste Services dispute. The Council was also taking forward pre planning preparations for the industrial action by Unison and the NEU.
- That the Council's Staff Conference would take place on 19th March 2020 and would be addressing climate change.
- He also congregated staff on receiving nominations for a number LGC Awards.

5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

5.1 Petition regarding Waste collection in the Limehouse ward.

Paul Howick 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.

He outlined the Council's intention to bring the waste collection service back in house from 1st April 2020 and to carry out a review of the waste collection rounds within the first 6 months of this taking place to ensure they were made as efficient as possible. He also expressed a commitment to continue to work with staff with a view to bringing forward improvement to the services in the short term.

He offered to meet with the Petitioners to give further consideration to their concerns.

RESOLVED:

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

5.2 Petition regarding Bartlett Park Football Changing Rooms.

Terry Mcgrenera addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and responded to questions from Members. Councillor Sabina Akhtar, Cabinet

Member for Culture, Arts and Brexit, then responded to the matters raised in the petition. She advised that there had been consultation on the proposals in line with the requirements. The proposals had full planning permission, to provide fit for purposes sports facilities. The facilities may be used for a range of sports activities and met Sports England requirements. The plans formed part of a wider programme of improvements to the Bartlett Park.

She expressed a willingness to meet with the petitioners to further discuss this matters raised in the Petition.

RESOLVED:

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

5.3 Petition requesting that Tower Hamlets Council take urgent action on air pollution.

Local college students 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.

She thanked the students for attending the meeting.

She confirmed that the Council appreciated the importance of addressing air pollution issues. In view of this, it actively engaged in ongoing activities to implement the following initiatives:

- the new Liveable Street Programme to facilitate walking and cycling in the Borough.
- the provision of new electric vehicle charging points.
- working to ensure that the Government invested in new infrastructure to improve air quality in hot spots.

She also encouraged the students to stay engaged with the Council and to continue to hold them to account.

RESOLVED:

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

5.4 Petition regarding Keep Clear Boxes at Cornwall Street.

Mohammad Rakib 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.

He advised of the potential solutions available to the Council to address the issues. For example, working with relevant partners, the Council may paint white keep clear signs on the road, and similar ideas may provide a straightforward and effective solution. Alternatively, the Council could look to install a keep clear yellow box on the street. However this option may take longer to implement in view of the statutory requirements. He expressed a desire to keep in touch with progress with the issue.

RESOLVED:

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

Procedural Motion

Councillor Peter Golds **moved** and Mayor John Biggs **seconded**, a procedural motion “that under Council Procedure Rule 11.2, an urgent motion regarding the Covid – 19 Virus to be considered as the next item of business”. The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

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

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

7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE- REGARDING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY.

7 – Administration Motion regarding the Climate Emergency

Councillor Rachel Blake **moved** and Councillor Amina Ali **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Andrew Wood **moved** and Councillor Peter Golds **seconded** the following amendment to the motion to be debated.

Added text underlined & in bold
Deleted text scored out.

This Council notes:

1. That the Deputy Mayor Cllr Rachel Blake declared a climate emergency in Tower Hamlets in March 2019 as reported in minutes of the meeting, and Full Council supported that declaration through a resolution in July 2019;
2. That the impacts of the climate emergency are clear for everyone

- to see, from the devastating fires in Australia and California, to the recent widespread flooding in the UK;
3. 40% of residents in Tower Hamlets live in areas that breach EU and government guidance on safe levels of air pollution;
 4. Our ambition to become a zero-carbon council by 2025;
 5. That Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has promised to deliver a green new deal for London with a target for the capital to be carbon-neutral by 2030 in advance of his campaign to be re-elected.

This Council further notes the ongoing work locally to tackle the emergency and improve air quality:

1. Since the Climate Emergency declaration last year we have produced a Net Zero Carbon Roadmap that has baselined the Council's emissions and produced an action plan of projects with the aim of the council becoming net zero carbon by 2025;
2. That at the July 2019 Full Council meeting, members resolved that a Tower Hamlets Climate Emergency Annual Report should be produced every year, and that none has yet been produced as of March 2020:
3. The council's electricity supply has been switched to a 100% renewable tariff; at least a decade after it was possible to do so:
4. The street-light upgrade to LEDs has continued and is close to completion, but has chosen not to take the opportunity to add vehicle recharging points to the base of the new streetlights next to parking spots as other Councils including Hackney have done;
5. That we roll out LED lighting in all Council run facilities where possible; including switching off lights in the Town Hall when staff leave.
6. We are also working with other London Boroughs through London Councils, the London Environment Coordinators Forum (LECF), Association of Local Energy Officers (ALEO) and London Boroughs Energy Group (LBEG) to see how Boroughs can work together on projects to address the Climate Emergency and working together to make representations to Government around what support we need to be able to tackle the climate emergency;
7. We are currently carrying out a study to identify suitable roof space for solar panels, since there are none on any LBTH owned /run buildings except Watney Market Idea Store despite previous government provided substantial incentives to install solar panels:
8. The £15m Liveable Streets programme, which aims to make it easier, safer and more convenient to get around by foot, bike and public transport, and which has chosen not to take the opportunity to consult the community on where to install new road side electric vehicle charging points; we have just 42 electric vehicle charging points well below that of neighbouring Hackney.
9. We are taking innovative action at a local level, for example London's first 'recycled' road was laid on Canrobert Street in

- Bethnal Green where approximately 100 recycled tyres were mixed into a new road surface;
10. Tower Hamlets Council has been awarded £350,000 from the Mayor of London's Local Enterprise Panel to help businesses tackle air pollution in the borough. The funding will enable the council to help small businesses reduce harmful emissions that contribute to poor air quality in Tower Hamlets;
 11. The loss of £14.3 million of the value of our reserves through inflation in the last three years because we did not have a plan to spend some of that money for example to mitigate climate change e.g. buying solar farms;
 12. The launch of school and play streets;
 13. To commit not to build new schools or expand them next to major roads when Environmental Health officers confirm that even at the height of the air intakes feeding fresh air into the school that pollution is high and that windows on the ground and 1st floor should not be capable of being opened;
 14. To commit not to build new schools or expand them, which might force pupils to have to wait outside or play in areas with poor air quality like next to major roads;
 15. Our Air Quality Action Plan which outlines the action the council will take to improve air quality in Tower Hamlets;
 16. The council is on track to plant more than 2,200 trees this year, taking the total number of trees delivered in the past two years to more than 5,000. We have recently been awarded £320k from the Greater London Authority which will be used towards new highways tree pits; a realistic number compared to the 2 million trees Sadiq Khan promised in his 2016 London Mayoral campaign, which have not yet materialised.
 17. Commit to no net loss of trees on any re-development especially on publicly owned land;
 18. Commit to growing green walls/parks/tree barriers/installing planters next to all major roads in the Borough especially where residential properties are next to main roads which will help absorb pollutants and particulate matter;
 19. Not to spend £120k on a metal A12 Acoustic Barrier but trial a plant based barrier to reduce noise instead;
 20. Commit to introducing more greenery whether at ground level, on vertical walls (as at Arnhem Wharf school) or hanging from street lights (as in Belgravia) which will help absorb pollutants and particulate matter (as well as make the Borough a more attractive place);
 21. Commit to install new accessible bicycle parking spots across the borough including at our new Town Hall site in Whitechapel as well as at Mulberry Place;
 22. Our anti-idling campaign continues, with a minimum of one site visit/anti-idling action undertaken every week and LBTH remains part of the pan-London scheme; despite the fact that not one single fine has so far been issued.
 23. We are reviewing the waste fleet of vehicles, after recently installing new diesel fuel storage tanks at the transport depot on

- Silvocea Way and spending £10 million on new fossil fuelled refuse vehicles despite the City of London first trialling new electric refuse vehicles in May 2018;
24. That of the 109 refuse vehicles the council operates 97 are diesel vehicles.
 25. That the council should review the whole of its own vehicle fleet, to speed up the use of electric, hydrogen or hybrid vehicles, to install electric vehicle chargers on Council properties;
 26. That recycling rates have fallen in recent years; the percentage of household waste sent for recycling in Tower Hamlets is 28% against a London average of 33%.
 27. The failure to get developers to deliver on site energy generation options except for a few dock based heat exchangers;
 28. To substantially expand the network of permanent air quality monitoring stations which can provide real time online data from the current four to having some kind of online sensor outside every school so that should air quality deteriorate that appropriate actions can be taken by school staff;
 29. We are installing two electric vehicle charging points to facilitate zero emissions ice cream vans; while continuing to lack electric vehicle charging points in LBTH owned / run facilities unlike Brent Council; just £150,000 has been budgeted for more electric vehicle charging points for 2020/21. This is not enough. Much more money needs to be invested as this is also an income earner for the council and adequate funds should be invested.
 30. To commit to having electric vehicle charging points on every street by 2022 following the example of Hackney Council as set out in November 2019;
 31. That we will look to encourage or set up ourselves last mile depots where deliveries can be made by truck but that onward transport can be done by cargo bikes or electric bikes/vehicles as is done in places like Hamburg by UPS.
 32. We are working with partners and projects including Citizens UK, Sustrans, Low Emission Neighbourhoods, Zero Emission Neighbourhoods to help our communities reduce air pollution;
 33. That we will stop allowing new homes to be built so close to major roads especially when they are not air conditioned forcing residents into an invidious choice between opening their windows (assuming they can).
 34. We will write to the Port of London Authority to thank them for installing air quality monitors on the Isle of Dogs to monitor cruise ships moored at Greenwich, where we failed to take any action, despite local residents asking for air quality from these ships to be measured.
 35. We will write to Greenwich Council to make our opposition to cruise ships being moored without an onshore power supply at Greenwich Pier known.
 36. We will greatly expand our CCTV network to proactively use it to deter vehicles that fly-tip, causing damage to our environment. We will use this evidence to prosecute those who flytip or dump

abandoned vehicles. We currently only have 360 CCTV cameras. All our neighbouring boroughs have more, Hackney 2,500, Newham 1100, Lewisham, 504, Southwark 464.

This Council believes:

1. That sustained and ambitious action is needed at a local, national and international level in order to tackle the climate emergency;
2. The climate emergency affect everybody but has a particular impact on those less able to adapt ~~is also a social justice issue, with the worst affected by the crisis and poor air quality the lowest contributors to the changing climate;~~
3. We should stop displacement activity, blaming others for their weaknesses in order to divert attention from our own failings, when we have our own house in order we can then spend time on chastising others for their inaction;
4. ~~That the Conservative Government is not taking the emergency seriously enough, with the former President of the COP26 UN Climate talks condemning the Prime Minister's inaction;~~
5. ~~That the Government's Brexit negotiating position threatens to severely weaken our own environmental protections and ambitions;~~

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the Government to recognise the seriousness of the climate emergency and take a more active role in tackling it;
2. To support the next Mayor of London in his or her efforts to transform London into a carbon- neutral city and examine what Tower Hamlets Council can do to support that aim;
3. To introduce climate impact assessments;
4. To continue to deliver our Air Quality Action Plan;
5. To deliver the Net Zero Carbon Roadmap:
6. To be much more pro-active and to focus on delivery rather than virtue signalling through motions;
7. To stop building over green areas and sites of biodiversity. Limehouse Triangle gained planning permission at the 5th attempt last year, just weeks after the council declared a climate emergency. Tower Hamlets ranks as the third worse borough in London for available green space;
8. To make better use of our extensive resources to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, poor air quality and other damage to our environment;
9. To begin to replace the council's stock of vehicles with green electric/hybrid vehicles. Out of 206 vehicles in the council fleet 183 are powered by diesel;
10. We will write to Greenwich Council to explore ways Tower Hamlets Council can help facilitate the instillation of on shore power supplies for cruise ship that moor at Greenwich in the future;
11. Not to build new schools next to major roads.

Following debate, the amendment was put to a vote and was **defeated**.

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

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1. That the Mayor declared a climate emergency in Tower Hamlets in March 2019, and Full Council supported that declaration through a resolution in July 2019;
2. That the impacts of the climate emergency are clear for everyone to see, from the devastating fires in Australia and California, to the recent widespread flooding in the UK;
3. 40% of residents in Tower Hamlets live in areas that breach EU and government guidance on safe levels of air pollution;
4. Our ambition to become a zero carbon council by 2025;
5. That Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has promised to deliver a green new deal for London with a target for the capital to be carbon-neutral by 2030.

This Council further notes the ongoing work locally to tackle the emergency and improve air quality:

1. Since the Climate Emergency declaration last year we have produced a Net Zero Carbon Roadmap that has baselined the Council's emissions and produced an action plan of projects with the aim of the council becoming net zero carbon by 2025;
2. That at the July 2019 Full Council meeting, members resolved that a Tower Hamlets Climate Emergency Annual Report should be produced every year;
3. The council's electricity supply has been switched to a 100% renewable tariff;
4. The street-light upgrade to LEDs has continued and is close to completion;
5. We are also working with other London Boroughs through London Councils, the London Environment Coordinators Forum (LECF), Association of Local Energy Officers (ALEO) and London Boroughs Energy Group (LBEG) to see how Boroughs can work together on projects to address the Climate Emergency and working together to make representations to Government around what support we need to be able to tackle the climate emergency;
6. We are currently carrying out a study to identify suitable roof space for solar panels;
7. The £15m Liveable Streets programme, which aims to make it easier, safer and more convenient to get around by foot, bike and public transport;
8. We are taking innovative action at a local level, for example London's first 'recycled' road was laid on Canrobert Street in Bethnal Green where approximately 100 recycled tyres were mixed into a new road surface;

9. Tower Hamlets Council has been awarded £350,000 from the Mayor of London's Local Enterprise Panel to help businesses tackle air pollution in the borough. The funding will enable the council to help small businesses reduce harmful emissions that contribute to poor air quality in Tower Hamlets;
10. The launch of school and play streets;
11. Our Air Quality Action Plan which outlines the action the council will take to improve air quality in Tower Hamlets;
12. The council is on track to plant more than 2,200 trees this year, taking the total number of trees delivered in the past two years to more than 5,000. We have recently been awarded £320k from the Greater London Authority which will be used towards new highways tree pits;
13. Our anti-idling campaign continues, with a minimum of one site visit/anti-idling action undertaken every week and LBTH remains part of the pan-London scheme;
14. We are reviewing the waste fleet of vehicles;
15. We are installing two electric vehicle charging points to facilitate zero emissions ice cream vans;
16. We are working with partners and projects including Citizens UK, Sustrans, Low Emission Neighbourhoods, Zero Emission Neighbourhoods to help our communities reduce air pollution.

This Council believes:

1. That sustained and ambitious action is needed at a local, national and international level in order to tackle the climate emergency;
2. The climate emergency is also a social justice issue, with the worst affected by the crisis and poor air quality the lowest contributors to the changing climate;
3. That the Conservative Government is not taking the emergency seriously enough, with the former President of the COP26 UN Climate talks condemning the Prime Minister's inaction;
4. That the Government's Brexit negotiating position threatens to severely weaken our own environmental protections and ambitions;

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the Government to recognise the seriousness of the climate emergency and take a more active role in tackling it;
2. To support the Mayor of London in his efforts to transform London into a carbon-neutral city and examine what Tower Hamlets Council can do to support that aim;
3. To introduce climate impact assessments;
4. To continue to deliver our Air Quality Action Plan;
5. To deliver the Net Zero Carbon Roadmap.

8. OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE - REGARDING CAR PARKING**8. Opposition Motion for Debate from the Conservative Group - regarding Car Parking**

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

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

9. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**9.1 Report of General Purposes Committee, Pay Policy 2020/21**

The Council considered a report of the General Purposes Committee on the Pay Policy Statement 2020-21.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 be agreed.
2. Agree that the proposed changes to the Pay Policy 2020/21 that would be needed to reflect the implementation a revised grading structure are agreed and can be made as set out in this report.
3. Delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Divisional Director HR and Organisational Development, Chair of the GP Committee and Monitoring Officer, any minor changes to the 2020/21 pay policy statement.

10. OTHER BUSINESS**10.1 Members Allowances Scheme 2020/21**

The Council considered the report of the Corporate Director, Governance proposing the adoption of the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2020/21.

RESOLVED:

1. That the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members' Allowances Scheme 2020 be adopted as set out at Appendix A to the report
2. Agree that the Members Allowances Budget be adjusted as necessary to cover the costs following the uprating of the local government pay award as set out at 3.4 of the report.
3. Agree that the Mayor writes to the Secretary of State on behalf of the Council requesting that Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Sickness leave for Members be brought into line with the Statutory Regulations.

10.2 Committee Calendar 2020/21

The Council considered the report of the Corporate Director, Governance proposing a Calendar of Meetings for 2020/21

RESOLVED:

1. Approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
2. To delegate to the Corporate Director, Governance the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.

11. 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.

11.1 Question from Councillor Asma Islam:

Can the lead member inform us of the number of social homes available in the development Locksley A in Mile End?

Response of Mayor John Biggs:

There were 33 new Council homes in the development, comprising a mixture of 1-3 bedroom units with landscaping works. A number of Councillors visited the new development last week. All of the homes were at social rents with 85% at London Affordable Rent and 15% at Tower Hamlets Living Rent. The development also comprised 3 wheelchair assessable units, which represents 10% of the development.

No supplementary question was asked.

11.2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds:

Will the Mayor update the council on the management of parking infringement and road safety consequent upon parking infringements on the Isle of Dogs?

Response of Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for the Environment:

I can assure you that the Civil Enforcement Team carried out a range of measures to manage parking infringement on the Isle of Dogs. The Enforcement Officers undertake patrols and issues fines where necessary.

Steps had also been taken to increase the number of patrols and introduce new parking restrictions on Manchester Road as part of the parking development work programme. Further measures included: the installation of double yellow lines and loading bays around the Emerald Gardens development on Westferry Road. Further consideration could be given to the introduction of yellow lines on Island Point development on Westferry Road. This would require further investigation. The work can be carried out in the next few months.

Supplementary question from Councillor Peter Golds:

Can you provide further reassurances about the action to deal with the concerns raised by residents about illegal parking, particularly at Island Point and Manchester Road?

Councillor David Edgar's response to supplementary question:

I am happy to discuss with Councillor Golds the issues he is concerned about, with a view to moving on changes that would help residents.

11.3 Question from Councillor Bex White:

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on actions taken by the Council and its partners in response to the petition from Residents living around Jolly's Green which was brought to Full Council in November?

Response of Councillor Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities:

The Safer Neighbourhood Team, worked closely with partners in the area to address anti-social behaviour issues. They have developed a multi - agency action plan to prevent and reduce such issues. It should also be noted that the Lansbury Ward Panel would have a role in overseeing the implementation of the plan, and that it would be considered by the Panel.

No supplementary question was asked.

11.4 Question from Councillor Andrew Wood

Tiller road leisure centre was built in the 1970's, has any consideration been given to re-developing by the Mayor, should One Housing Group residents vote to regenerate the Kedge House area as part of a joint development like that undertaken by Greenwich & Camden Councils?

Response of Mayor John Biggs:

The Council currently has no plans at present to redevelop the Tiller Road Leisure Centre. However, as a part of the re-procurement of the Council's Leisure Management Contract, it was intended to carry out a review of longer term options for the Leisure Centres, over the next few months

Supplementary question from Councillor Andrew Wood:

I am aware of a number of progressive joint projects involving Local Authorities working with developers to build new Leisure Centres, (such as by Greenwich and Camden Councils). Will the Mayor look at these ideas?

Mayor John Biggs response to supplementary question:

I am willing to look at different options, particularly if they were cost effective.

11.6 Question from Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE:

Following the public meetings about the Boundary Estate, will the cabinet member update me on what actions the council are taking, particularly around tackling burglary, petty crime and ASB?

Response of Mayor John Biggs:

I have attended a number of public meetings on the estate to look at the concerns around such issues as the impact from the night time economy, ASB, parking issues and housing management. The Council had carried out a number of initiatives to address these issues, such as changing parking hours to address ASB. I look forward to a further meeting to look at how these measures are addressing this issues and how the Liveable Street initiative can help improve the neighbourhood.

Supplementary question from Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE:

Many residents now live in fear especially after the recent incidents of serious crime on the estate. Residents are terrified and very concerned. My question is what reassurances can you provide to those people affected?

Mayor John Biggs response to supplementary question:

I can reassure you that the Council is very conscious of the wider ranging issues with crime and ASB in the. We will be responding to any urgent issues before the next Boundary Estate public meeting, scheduled to take place in May.

11.8 Question from Councillor Val Whitehead:

Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member update members on the resilience of our Adult Social Care to Covid-19 and what measures we are taking to protect our vulnerable residents?

Response of Councillor Amina Ali, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing:

The situation is very fluid and Adult Social Care Services are keeping abreast of the latest Government advice. We note that the virus is likely to result in mild symptoms for many, and that it will particularly affect the vulnerable

groups in the community. The number of cases are likely rise and will have a significant impact on the Adults Social Care Service. The service is well informed of the prevention measures, due to experience with dealing with the winter flue. Staff were regularly updated.

We await a further update on the National Guidance measures and will continue to focus on preventative measures

Supplementary question from Councillor Val Whitehead:

Have you any advice for people in insecure employment that may need to take time off?

Councillor Amina Ali's response to supplementary question:

As noted in the Mayor's earlier report, the Council and the Trade Unions are concerned about this. We await for any emergency government legislation and we are monitoring the situation very closely. Should these measures not progress quickly, the Council looks forward to working with other Local Council's, if necessary, to work with the Government to help those on zero hour contracts.

11.9 Question from Councillor James King:

What action has the council taken against complaints about the academisation process Cyril Jackson Primary school is going through?

Response of Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People

In view of the concerns from parents, the Council commissioned an external review of the process. The Independent Reviewer met with the school leaders and submitted their findings to the Regional School Commissioner. We remained concerned about two areas in particular around: former Head Teacher's potential conflict of interest in the process, and the failure to fully establish reasons for the decision to join the University Schools Trust.

No supplementary question was asked.

11.10 Question from Councillor Kyrsten Perry:

Can the Cabinet member please provide an update on the performance of payments by results for the Government's 'Troubled Families' programme?

Response of Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People:

In Tower Hamlets, this programme is called 'Supporting Stronger Families', and this provides help to families with a range of problems and provided payments by results. The totals for recent years are as follows:

- 2015/16 - 8 payments,
- 2016/17 - 77
- 2017/18 - 522
- 2018/19 - 664
- 2019/20 - 984.

Supplementary question from Councillor Kyrsten Perry:

Can you provided an update on the future of the 'Troubled Families' programme?

Councillor Danny Hassell's, response to supplementary question:

This is a National programme and funding was due to end this year. However, due to the delays in the Government Comprehensive Spending Review, the long term future of the programme remains unclear.

The Government had confirmed its intention to extend the programme for a year, the coming financial year. The Council needed much more certainty from the Government on the longer term future of the programme.

11.11 Question from Councillor Shah Ameen:

Following the recent stabbing in London Central Mosque, what steps are we taking as a council to ensure the safety of our mosques and other places of worship?

Response of Councillor Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities:

The community was shocked to hear about this terrible incident. It should be noted that ensuring the safety of our mosques and other places of worships continues to be a priority for the Council. The Council were working hard with the Police and community to ensure appropriate action was taken. The Community Safety team provided support to places of worship with gaining access to the Government's Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme for safety improvements and assistance and to secure additional external funding. There was also ongoing work to improve the protected security at the London Central Mosque

Supplementary question from Councillor Shah Ameen:

Can you provide assurances regarding the work with Mosques and other faith buildings to take forward these measures?

Councillor Asma Begum's response to supplementary question:

I note the impact of the devastating terrorist attacks, particular the tragic event in New Zealand. The Council had a Designing Out Crime Officer that had engaged with all places of worship to provide help with apply for the funding.

The Mayor and the Cabinet Member undertook to attend any public meetings about these issues, to look at these issues.

11.12 Question from Councillor Dipa Das:

Can you please update Members on what we are doing to help young people into work?

Response of Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman, Cabinet Member for Work and Economic Growth:

The Council carries out a lot of work to support young people into employment. The WorkPath team worked hard to identify opportunities for residents. In the previous two years, 38% of those helped into employment were under the age of 25. The Council's Careers team also provided advice to school children at age 11 and 12 to help plan their future. Last year, the number of young people in employment, education and training rose from 95.1% to 96.6%. The Council had met the targets for the Mayor's apprenticeship scheme. The Council would continue to work hard to help young people secure employment opportunities.

No supplementary question was asked.

11.13 Question from Councillor Puru Miah:

Does the Council include Socio-Economic inequalities in its Equality Impact Assessments, as laid out in Section 1 of the Equalities Act 2010?

Response of Councillor Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities:

The Council's assessment process sets out measures to ensure that due regard is given to the equalities issues, including the social economic impact. Our Guidance is published on the Council's Website. I can also provide you with a specific example in relation to the equalities impact assessment for the proposals to close Raines School. The decisions around the school uniform grant complied with the relevant requirements

Supplementary question from Councillor Puru Miah:

Should the Council follow the Scotland government in respect of its approach to carrying out Socio-Economic inequalities assessments?

Councillor Asma Begum's response to supplementary question:

I am happy to discuss this with the Councillor further.

11.14 Question from Councillor Mohammed Pappu:

What is the council doing to resolve the constant water pressure issues that many residents on the Isle of Dogs are facing in their households?

Response of Mayor John Biggs:

This is a recurrent issue - in this area and the Bethnal Green area as well. Whilst the Council had no direct powers in relation to water issues, and our responsibilities were complicated, the Council worked with the Greater London Authority and Thames Water to develop an integrated water management delivery plan. The Council may also work with landlords to supply pumps and consult Thames Water on all strategic planning applications.

Supplementary question from Councillor Mohammed Pappu:

The residents most affected by these problems are normally the disabled and those with special needs and residents with difficulty in paying bills. What support can the Council provide to mitigate this?

Mayor John Biggs response to supplementary question:

I am happy to work with landlords, management agents, individual households and in particular, social landlords where residents with disabilities, and those experience difficulties in paying their bills, are often in occupation. The Council can't solve these problems ourselves but I am happy to continue to work with the residents to work to address these problems.

11.15 Question from Councillor Rabina Khan:

The Global Gender Report 2020 revealed that gender parity would not be attained in 100 years. How will the Mayor commit to ensure that the council works to address gender parity in the workplace, council service delivery and the voluntary sector?

Response of Councillor Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities:

The Council is committed to ensuring gender equality at the Council and in the wider Borough. The Council had invested in a number of gender equality programmes including initiatives regarding: reducing violence against women, supporting access to work and access to childcare. An example of the work included supporting an introduction into construction. The Council had also funded a series of event to mark International Women's Day to raise aspirations of local women and girls.

Supplementary question from Councillor Rabina Khan:

Can the Mayor provide confirmation regarding pay equality for employee's carrying out the same role?

Councillor Asma Begum response to supplementary question.

I am happy to meet with you to give you a detailed response.

Questions 11.5, 11.7 were not put due to the absence of the questioner. A written response would be provided to these questions. (Note the written responses are included in Appendix A to these minutes)

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

12.1 Motion regarding NJC Pay.

Councillor Ehtasham Haque **moved** and Councillor Tarik Khan **seconded** the motion as printed in the agenda

Following debate, the motion was **agreed**.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes

1. Local Government has endured central government funding cuts of nearly 50% since 2010.
2. Between 2010 and 2020, councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 they have received from central government.
3. The 2019 LGA survey of council finances found that 1 in 3 councils fear they will run out of funding to provide even their statutory, legal duties by 2022/23. This number rises to almost two thirds of councils by 2024/2025 or later.
4. The LGA estimates councils will face a funding gap of £8 billion by 2025.
5. Faced with these cuts from central government, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing 22 per cent of their value since 2009/10.
6. At the same time as seeing their pay go down in real terms, workers experience ever increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, an estimated 876,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of 30 per cent. Local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector.
7. There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three quarters of the local government workforce.

This Council believes

1. Our workers are public service super heroes. They keep our communities clean, look after those in need and keep our towns and cities running.
2. Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services our residents rely on would not be deliverable.
3. Government funding has been cut to the extent that a proper pay rise could result in a reduction in local government services.
4. The government needs to take responsibility and fully fund increases in

pay; it should not put the burden on local authorities whose funding been cut to the bone.

This Council resolves to

1. Note the pay claim submitted by GMB, UNISON and Unite on behalf of council and school workers for a £10 per hour minimum wage and a 10 per cent uplift across all other pay points in 2020/21, whilst recognising that local authorities as employers are bound by the results of any national negotiations undertaken by the unions and the NJC.
2. Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim.
3. Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government.
4. Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim.
5. Encourage all local government workers to join a union.

(Motions 12.2 and 12.3 were not considered due to lack of time).

13. URGENT MOTION

13.1 Urgent Motion regarding the Covid-19 Virus

The Council agreed to suspend Procedure Rule 13.1 to enable the following urgent motion to be debated without notice regarding the Covid-19 Virus

Councillor Peter Golds **moved** and Mayor John Biggs **seconded** the motion as tabled

The motion was unanimously **agreed**.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1. Widespread concern about the Covid-19 virus;
2. The coronavirus outbreak has been labelled a pandemic by the World Health Organization;
3. That four cases have been reported in Tower Hamlets as at the 10th March;
4. Panic buying of essentials over the last weekend;
5. That we are currently in the containment phase of the response;
6. That the NHS advice is;

DO

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

DON'T

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

This Council resolves:

1. To more pro-actively inform residents about what it is doing, for example about the cleaning of public facilities likely to be touched by residents and what residents should do in this phase of the virus;
2. To more pro-actively instruct people on how to wash their hands for example and what behaviours to avoid i.e. spitting in public, as well as on keeping your distance from others where possible;
3. To ensure school pupils are educated in what to do as regards the virus and to encourage them pass that information onto their families;
4. To clean areas / items where residents / visitors are likely to touch things for example toilet doors, computers in Ideas stores, entrance doors etc.
5. The council will work more closely with faith communities to help them implement any necessary precautions to ensure they can attend their places of worship in safety if possible. For example this includes the run up to Ramadan and other faith observations;
6. Maintain a constant dialogue with faith communities to ensure the Council can ensure they have the most up-to-date information as this can rapidly change;
7. That LBTH should publicise what it will do should the government decide to move onto the Delay and then Mitigation phase of the crisis;
8. To translate the advice into languages used across Tower Hamlets;
9. To work with local retailers to ensure that they do not run out of essentials;
10. That the Public Health department publicise their and others public bodies responsibilities so that residents are aware of who is responsible for what across government agencies;
11. That the Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee have a verbal update from appropriate Council officers and review all pre-existing Public Health plans as soon as possible and also review the Communications plan to be used at each stage of the response.

The meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.

Speaker of the Council