

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS****MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL****HELD AT 7.04 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2023****COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL****Members Present:**

Mayor Lutfur Rahman (Member)	Councillor Peter Golds (Member)
Councillor Faroque Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Iqbal Hossain (Member)
Councillor Kabir Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Kabir Hussain (Member)
Councillor Leelu Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Kamrul Hussain (Member)
Councillor Musthak Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain (Member)
Councillor Saied Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Asma Islam (Member)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Sirajul Islam (Member)
Councillor Suluk Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Ahmodul Kabir (Member)
Councillor Ohid Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled (Member)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Member)	Councillor Ahmodur Khan (Member)
Councillor Amina Ali (Member)	Councillor James King (Member)
Councillor Asma Begum (Member)	Councillor Abdul Malik (Member)
Councillor Maisha Begum (Member)	Councillor Abdul Mannan (Member)
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait (Member)	Councillor Ana Miah (Member)
Councillor Rachel Blake (Member)	Councillor Harun Miah (Member)
Councillor Mufedah Bustin (Member)	Councillor Amin Rahman (Member)
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Rebaka Sultana (Member)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Maium Talukdar (Member)
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Bellal Uddin (Member)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Abdal Ullah (Member)
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Abdul Wahid (Member)
Councillor Marc Francis (Member)	

**The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury in the Chair**

The Speaker of the Council provided his update to the Council. He noted that he had attended several events, including events to mark anniversaries of organisations such as the QVSR who had celebrated 180 years of service. Other highlights included:

- Welcoming new citizens to the borough at Citizenship ceremonies.

- Attending events to celebrate Black History Month. The speaker had attended the Living Legacies exhibition celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Windrush generation. He had also attended the Grand Union Orchestra performance.
- The Speaker had attended the opening night of a Season of Bangla Drama, which he highly recommended.
- He had visited the charities that he is supporting – St Joseph’s Hospice and Eden Care UK and said he looked forward to the annual fundraiser being held in December 2023.
- He said he had attended the civic ceremony at Westminster Abbey and the Lord Mayor show.
- He had participated in the Annual Peace Walk which was organised by the National Hate Crime awareness week. He said that in Tower Hamlets the message was clear that there was No Place for Hate.

Lastly, the Speaker spoke of the ongoing tragedy in the Middle East. He said the Borough had always welcomed people from around the world fleeing persecution or seeking opportunity, who made Tower Hamlets their home. He said the ongoing death and destruction in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel was difficult to bear. He said the Council was working with its partners to ensure all communities can live safely side by side.

The Speaker expressed his condolences to Palestinians and Israelis who had lost loved ones and urged leaders to urgently call for a ceasefire and seek a lasting peace.

The Chief Executive, Mr Stephen Halsey also expressed his thoughts relating to the on-going destruction of Gaza and the steps the Council had taken to ensure community harmony, especially as tensions were running high.

The Chamber stood for a minute’s silence in recognition of the deaths of innocent civilians.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor Amy Lee
- Councillor Ayas Miah

Councillor Sabina Khan was unable to join the meeting in person but joined remotely. It was noted that she would be unable to vote as she was not formally in attendance.

## 2. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS**

Councillors Ahmodur Khan, Bodrul Choudhury, Abdul Wahid, Abdul Mannan, Maium Talukdar and Abdal Ullah declared a non-disclosable other interest in item 8, the Opposition Motion for Debate on Support for the Information and Advice Sector as they had links to the voluntary sector but not within the advice sector.

Councillor Mushtak Ahmed declared that as the Council's appointed representative on the East End Citizens Advice Bureau he had a non-disclosable other interest in relation to the advice sector but not in relation to the body referenced in the motion.

All Members remained in the chamber for the debate on the motion.

## 3. **MINUTES**

The Council **RESOVLED** to:

1. Agreed that the minutes of the extraordinary and ordinary Council meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Speaker was authorised to sign them accordingly.

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

### **Announcements from the Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive, Stephen Halsey provided his regular update to the Council meeting, highlighting the following issues:

- He informed Council that the Annual Governance Statements were now available publicly for all four years up to and including 2022-23. He said this was important especially in the absence of the signed off accounts which were in the process of being reviewed and signed off by the Audit Committee.
- Mr Halsey provided an update on the Corporate Peer Review and said they were working with the LGA Peer Review Team, who would be publishing their report and action plan in December 2023.
- He provided an update regarding the Corporate Leadership Team and new appointments to it. He welcomed Mr Paul Patterson as the Corporate Director for Housing and Regeneration and wished Mr James Thomas, Corporate Director for Children Services the best in his new role at Birmingham's Children Trust.
- Finally, Mr Halsey reported the Covid rates were stable. He encouraged everyone to benefit from the current Covid-19 and flu vaccination programme which was launched in September 2023.

## **5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS**

### **5.1 Petition requesting Public Space Protection Order to ban nuisance vehicles**

Mr Andrew Wood presented his petition regarding Public Space Protection Order to ban nuisance vehicles. He asked the Council to introduce a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to allow the Police and Council to deal with nuisance vehicles more effectively. He explained how noise disturbed residents with vehicles revving engines, performing tunnel runs and being a danger to residents. He said a PSPO could help control anti-social behaviour and should be applied across the borough of Tower Hamlets.

Members asked questions of the petitioner before Councillor Abu Talha Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities responded to matters raised in the petition. He said the Council and the Police were working closely together bringing different resources and enforcement powers to deal with issues. However, it was correct to state that the Council does have no specific power currently to deal with vehicles causing nuisance.

#### **RESOLVED**

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

### **5.2 Petition requesting Refund for missed waste collections**

Mr Micheal Bundy and Ms Lyn Misselbrook presented their petition requesting a refund of Council Tax for the missed rubbish and recycling collections during the summer. Mr Bundy said the missed collections resulted in rubbish being piled up, causing a health hazard and therefore council taxpayers ought to be compensated from the public purse.

Members asked questions of the petitioner before Councillor Kabir Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency responded to matters raised in the petition. He said the Council's Waste Operations were insourced in March 2020 from Veolia. No compensation payments had been paid to the Council for the one-week loss in service during the national strike action. He said the main factor for the strike was a national dispute on pay that affected Tower Hamlets unionised employees.

#### **RESOLVED**

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

### **5.3 Petition regarding Tower Hamlets Housing Allocation system for single people**

Mr Terry McGrenera presented his petition concerning housing allocation for single people. He said he had brought the petition following the fatal fire in Shadwell. He stated that the housing allocation system needed to be applied more fairly to those requiring social housing who were single and that the focus should not be just on families.

Members asked questions of the petitioner before Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding responded to matters raised in the petition. He said all residents who have lived in the borough for three years and who had recourse to public funds were able to register on the Council's Housing Register. He said there were currently over 24,000 applicants on the register, of which 10,444 require 1 bedroom accommodation. Last year the council allocated 476 1-bedroom homes to those on the register. Councillor Kabir stated that whilst single people were able to register and some would receive housing, there was a mismatch of supply and demand and unfortunately the council was unable to help all those requiring housing, however the Council endeavours to provide advice on other housing solutions that might be available.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the petition be referred to the Interim Corporate Director for Housing and Regeneration for a written response within 28 days.

## **6. MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Lutfur Rahman presented his report to the Council.

The Opposition Group Leader, Councillor Sirajul Islam then responded briefly to the Mayor's report.

Mayor Rahman provided concluding remarks.

## **7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE**

### **LOCAL PLAN**

Council considered a motion as printed in the agenda on the Local Plan that had been moved by Councillor Kabir Ahmed and seconded by Councillor Abu Talha Chowdhury.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

During the debate on the Administration Motion the Speaker of the Council moved to adjourn the meeting for half an hour under Procedure Rule 14.2 (4) to allow for a discussion on how to best proceed with the business following challenges from Members. At the conclusion of the adjournment the Speaker

agreed under Procedure Rule 14.1 (d) that the debate move straight to the right to reply and vote.

Following debate, the motion moved by Councillor Kabir Ahmed was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

## **RESOLVED**

### **This Council notes:**

- That overcrowding in the borough had been left unchecked from the years 2015 to 2022, with over 14,000 residents now classified as living in acutely overcrowded conditions.
- That the development of new, affordable homes for rent has not kept pace with the rapid population growth and concomitant rise in said overcrowding, with some years during the period 2015-2022 seeing as little as 140 homes completed in a single year.
- That the development of affordable housing has always played a central role of critical importance to Mayor Lutfur Rahman and his team, who delivered thousands of affordable, social homes for rent during his previous administrations.
- That this commitment has continued into this current administration's first term, with at least 4,000 affordable homes for rent pledged to be delivered, and over 1,000 already built or in the pipeline.
- That the Council's current Local Plan is due for a refresh, with the first version of this refreshed Plan – regulation 18 – passing through Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### **This Council believes:**

- That the delivery of affordable rented homes has slowed over the past seven years.
- That restrictive policies have prevented a greater number of affordable homes from being built, due to a limitation on height, density and the percentage of affordable units that must be delivered per development, alongside the tenure mix between affordable rented homes and intermediate properties.
- That the previous local plan was not ambitious enough to meet the growing demand for affordable and sustainable housing in Tower Hamlets.
- That the current proposed refresh will revolutionise and expedite the way that affordable housing is delivered in the years to come, tackling

the overcrowding crisis at a much greater pace and providing decent, affordable homes to the residents of Tower Hamlets.

- That this is demonstrated in the proposed commitment to raising the affordable housing criteria expected of developers from the existing 35% threshold to a more ambitious 40%; a redressing of the 70:30 affordable/ intermediate split of this 40% to a revised 85:15 ratio – guaranteeing more *genuinely* affordable homes for residents; and through the prioritisation of the development of 3 and 4 bedroom properties to accommodate the growing family-sized population of the borough.
- That this refreshed Local Plan will see height and density prioritised to help maximise the delivery of affordable housing, with the whole borough becoming a Tall Building Zone (TBZ) where this does not impact on cultural or heritage conservation areas. This will include a pushing of the maximum building height threshold to 23 storeys.
- That this refreshed Local Plan will be a catalyst for further social and economic development for all residents, as well as protecting and enhancing the borough's local environment and green spaces.
- That this refreshed Local Plan will respect, enhance and incorporate heritage and conservation areas into all new developments.
- That this refreshed Local Plan should be made accessible to all residents in the borough – regardless of language, race or background – to ensure that a fair and holistic engagement process is ensured, and all resident voices are heard.

**This Council resolves:**

- To support and promote engagement with the Regulation 18 version of the refreshed local plan for all residents.
- To work with the BME media to help promote this engagement.
- To commend the Lead Member and Officers for their hard work in capturing the ambition of this administration regarding housebuilding within the document.
- To request regular updates on the journey of the refreshed Local Plan through the relevant stages of its progression.

**8. OPPOSITION MOTION DEBATE**

**MORE SUPPORT FOR THE INFORMATION AND ADVISE SECTOR**

Council considered a motion as printed in the agenda on more support for the Information and Advice Sector that had been moved by Councillor Mufeedah Bustin and seconded by Councillor Sabina Akhtar.

Council also considered the amendment proposed by Councillor Saied Ahmed and seconded by Councillor Kabir Ahmed as set out in the supplementary agenda.

Additions – Bold

Deletions – ~~Struck through~~

**This council notes:**

1. **That the administration is committed to helping our vulnerable and disadvantaged residents, especially those affected by the current cost of living crisis.**
2. The voluntary sector in Tower Hamlets provides critical support to our residents, particularly in times of crisis.
3. The council's support of the information and advice sector is unique: many council's have reduced grants for this vital service.
4. Despite government funding reducing by over £200M in 10 years, the previous administration continued to invest in the information and advice sector, providing £900,000pa per year to the advice consortium from 2018-2023.
5. **The current funding strategy has ensured a good spread of resources, better access to services for all that need them and value for money.**
6. The 2021 LBTH Poverty Review identified the impact of multiple factors effecting residents' livelihoods, including the pandemic, a reduced welfare state and Brexit.
7. The Cost of Living crisis, high inflation and increasing interest rates, as well as the increasing cost of rents, is having a detrimental impact on the livelihoods of Tower Hamlets residents.
8. The Poverty Review also identified the important of local intervention in creating a safety net, in particular:  
"To make the biggest practical difference to residents, we recommend that the council works in partnership with other organisations and the community to achieve a step change....." through "early financial intervention - taking a whole systems approach to increasing incomes, reducing costs, and averting financial crisis and homelessness"
9. ~~That the 2023 Mayor's Community Fund has not increased the budgetary allocation for information and advice. Inflation means this is in effect a budgetary reduction, meaning reduced support for our residents.~~
10. **Despite budgetary challenges, administration has prioritised support for local information and advice services.**



- 11. That the administration should be commended for maintaining current levels of funding to support the sector and service users.**

**This council further believes:**

12. That the information and advice sector is experiencing an increased demand on its services as more and more people are seeking support and advice on a range of matters.
13. That this demand will increase significantly once the rollout of Universal Credit is fully implemented in the next 12 months.
14. That cross-organisation initiatives such as Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network (THCAN) provides efficiencies of scale, training and up to date welfare information, as well as resource sharing across the sector.
15. THCAN also maintains the digital referral system which allows organisations and individuals to refer cases to advisors which reduces waiting times and ensure urgent issues can be dealt with, preventing residents from experiencing crises and destitution.
- ~~16. This is not the time to be reducing support to the information and advice sector, and the council should, instead be increasing support.~~
- 17. That resources have been protected by this administration to deliver critical information and advice provision across the borough.**

**This council resolves:**

- ~~18. To call on Mayor Lutfur Rahman and the Lead Member to review the allocation of funding to the information and advice sector and THCAN with a view to increasing it and ensuring ongoing support.~~
- 19. To work with the Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Lead Member to explore support arrangements for THCAN and the wider sector in future.**

Following debate the amendment moved by Councillor Saied Ahmed and the substantive motion as amended were put to the vote and were **agreed**.

**RESOLVED**

**This council notes:**

1. That the administration is committed to helping our vulnerable and disadvantaged residents, especially those affected by the current cost of living crisis.

2. The voluntary sector in Tower Hamlets provides critical support to our residents, particularly in times of crisis.
3. The council's support of the information and advice sector is unique: many council's have reduced grants for this vital service.
4. Despite government funding reducing by over £200M in 10 years, the previous administration continued to invest in the information and advice sector, providing £900,000pa per year to the advice consortium from 2018-2023.
5. The current funding strategy has ensured a good spread of resources, better access to services for all that need them and value for money.
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9. "To make the biggest practical difference to residents, we recommend that the council works in partnership with other organisations and the community to achieve a step change....." through "early financial intervention - taking a whole systems approach to increasing incomes, reducing costs, and averting financial crisis and homelessness"
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15. THCAN also maintains the digital referral system which allows organisations and individuals to refer cases to advisors which reduces waiting times and ensure urgent issues can be dealt with, preventing residents from experiencing crises and destitution.

16. That resources have been protected by this administration to deliver critical information and advice provision across the borough.

**This council resolves:**

17. To work with the Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Lead Member to explore support arrangements for THCAN and the wider sector in future.

**9. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

**9.1 Report of the Standards Advisory Committee: Adoption of the Updated Member / Officer Relations Protocol**

Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning presented the report of the Standards Advisory Committee concerning the adoption of the updated member/officer relations protocol. Members of the Council commented on the report.

**RESOLVED**

Council **AGREED** to:

1. To adopt the revised Member/Officer Relations Protocol;
2. Agree that the updated Protocol be added to the Council's Constitution.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS**

Nil Items.

**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 Shafi Ahmed**

Could the lead member provide an update on the council's outstanding accounts requiring sign off? These accounts were left unsigned for years under the previous administration.

**Response of Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living**

The 2018/19 and 2019/20 accounts are expected to be signed off at the end of November.

Following widespread speculation of the shape and form of a central government initiative to ensure that the backlog of previous years' accounts is addressed, the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts will all be published early in the new year (re-presented in the case of the 2020/21 accounts). The hope and expectation is that the accounts will be able to go through the required statutory processes, although the precise shape and form of the audit is as yet unknown – there is speculation that government will issue special guidance for auditors.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Shafi Ahmed.**

How can we ensure delays to the accounts do not happen again?

### **Response of Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living**

It's important to note that the 2016/17 and 2017/18 accounts have been certified and now with the appointment of a permanent Section 151 Officer, the council is working towards completing the accounts for the outstanding years. Officers have been applying the improvement and have vastly improved the processes involved. The Council is awaiting the guidance from Central government regarding how the delayed accounts should be dealt with.

### **11.2 Question from Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury.**

A significant number of residents in Mile End, as well as throughout Tower Hamlets, are facing challenges when it comes to electric car charging. The availability of both slow and fast chargers is currently insufficient, leading to car owners driving around for extended periods in search of a charging station, which results in time-consuming charging processes. This situation is adversely impacting people's employment and daily routines. Could you please provide information about the council's strategy and plans for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the area?

### **Response from Councillor Kabir Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency**

The Council has published an EV strategy, which can be found at the following link <https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/evchargers>. The following sets out the numbers to be installed up to 2030

Year	2023/24 Delivery target	2024/25 Delivery target	2025/26 Delivery target	Total Target for 2026	Total Target for 2030
Slow	350	650	800	1800	5000

<b>Fast</b>	50	60	90	200	500
<b>Rapid</b>	10	10	15	35	100
<b>Total</b>	410	720	905	2035	5600

### **11.3 Question from Councillor Amin Rahman.**

Can the lead member provide an update on the outcome of the LGA Corporate Peer Review which took place between 18th and 22nd September of this year?

#### **Response of Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living**

The LGA Corporate Peer Review Process is a robust and rigorous assurance and improvement tool managed and delivered by the sector, for the sector. It is designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The Review Process covers:

1. Local priorities and outcomes
2. Organisational and place leadership
3. Governance and culture
4. Financial planning and management
5. Capacity for improvement

As the last LGA Corporate Peer Review had been completed 5 years ago and it is good practice to ensure a full review is undertaken every five years, The LGA were invited back to undertake a corporate peer review of the Council by the Mayor and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive asked that the peer review, when covering the above five areas, undertake a deeper review of leadership of place, finance and governance.

#### **Supplementary question from Councillor Amin Rahman.**

When is the LGA Peer Review going to be published?

#### **Response of Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living**

A formal report is scheduled to be published by the LGA in December.

A draft action plan will be prepared to draw together the actions necessary to address the recommendations emerging from the Peer Review. Following Council / Mayoral approval it is planned to be published alongside the LGA Peer Review Report in December.

### **11.4 Question from Councillor Marc Francis.**

How many homeless families are still currently housed in B&Bs beyond the six-week limit?

**Response from Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding**

As of November 2023, we have 229 families in Bed and Breakfast. We have inherited a perfect storm. With increased mortgage and interest rates and lack of social housing, the numbers of families seeking suitable accommodation including temporary accommodation has increased. We are waiting for the government to legislate against this. It's not just Tower Hamlets who is struggling with this but Councils across the country.

**Supplementary question from Councillor Marc Francis.**

Can the lead member state why Tower Hamlets is such an outlier of the 6-weeks limit?

**Response from Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding**

Tower Hamlets is taking steps to address this and is supporting residents. We have accommodated families in specific Bed and Breakfast hotels rather than corporate hotels and have set up modular homes for the homeless. We have our new local plan and hope to increase the amount of social housing available to us.

**11.5 Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussain.**

Could the lead member explain how he intends to generate much needed income from events in Victoria Park? Can he tell us how many events are being considered over the year, their capacities and how much does he expect to raise? I understand this money will go towards balancing the council budget as well as maintaining the park.

**Response of Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living**

Victoria Park is a key asset of the Council. It is a green flag rated park and has millions of visitors each year. It's a significant cultural hub and as such we are looking to generate income from holding social events. The "All points East" events generated £3m for the council and this is key income that can be used to support residents. The commercial events policy has been revised and the threshold has been increased from 5,000 to 20,000 in line with other London Boroughs.

Questions 11.6 to 11.28 were not put due to lack of time. The written responses are attached at **Appendix A**.

**12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Motions 12.1 was not considered due to lack of time.

The meeting ended at 10.30 p.m.

Speaker of the Council

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### Item 11: Member Questions and Answers

<p><b>11.1</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Shafi Ahmed</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member provide an update on the council’s outstanding accounts requiring sign off? These accounts were left unsigned for years under the previous administration.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The 2018/19 and 2019/20 accounts are expected to be signed off at the end of November.</p> <p>Following widespread speculation of the shape and form of a central government initiative to ensure that the backlog of previous years’ accounts is addressed, the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts will all be published early in the new year (re-presented in the case of the 2020/21 accounts). The hope and expectation is that the accounts will be able to go through the required statutory processes, although the precise shape and form of the audit is as yet unknown – there is speculation that government will issue special guidance for auditors.</p>																														
<p><b>11.2</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Mohammed Chowdhury</b></p>	<p>A significant number of residents in Mile End, as well as throughout Tower Hamlets, are facing challenges when it comes to electric car charging. The availability of both slow and fast chargers is currently insufficient, leading to car owners driving around for extended periods in search of a charging station, which results in time-consuming charging processes. This situation is adversely impacting people's employment and daily routines. Could you please provide information about the council's strategy and plans for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the area?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council has published an EV strategy, which can be found at the following link <a href="https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/evchargers">https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/evchargers</a>. The following sets out the numbers to be installed up to 2030</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 1688 1476 1989"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2023/24 Delivery target</th> <th>2024/25 Delivery target</th> <th>2025/26 Delivery target</th> <th>Total Target for 2026</th> <th>Total Target for 2030</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Slow</td> <td>350</td> <td>650</td> <td>800</td> <td>1800</td> <td>5000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fast</td> <td>50</td> <td>60</td> <td>90</td> <td>200</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rapid</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>15</td> <td>35</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>410</b></td> <td><b>720</b></td> <td><b>905</b></td> <td><b>2035</b></td> <td><b>5600</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2023/24 Delivery target	2024/25 Delivery target	2025/26 Delivery target	Total Target for 2026	Total Target for 2030	Slow	350	650	800	1800	5000	Fast	50	60	90	200	500	Rapid	10	10	15	35	100	<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>5600</b>
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11.3	<p><b>Question from Councillor Amin Rahman</b></p>	<p>Can the lead member provide an update on the outcome of the LGA Corporate Peer Review which took place between 18th and 22nd September of this year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The LGA Corporate Peer Review Process is a robust and rigorous assurance and improvement tool managed and delivered by the sector, for the sector. It is designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The Review Process covers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local priorities and outcomes</li> <li>2. Organisational and place leadership</li> <li>3. Governance and culture</li> <li>4. Financial planning and management</li> <li>5. Capacity for improvement</li> </ol> <p>As the last LGA Corporate Peer Review had been completed 5 years ago and it is good practice to ensure a full review is undertaken every five years, The LGA were invited back to undertake a corporate peer review of the Council by the Mayor and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive asked that the peer review, when covering the above five areas, undertake a deeper review of leadership of place, finance and governance.</p> <p>This review took place over five days in September. The review team undertook over 75 meetings and spoke to over 175 people including staff, external stakeholders and Councillors from all representative Parties.</p> <p>The Leader of the Peer Review Team was Carolyn Downs CB assisted by five other senior figures drawn from local government and a principle and regional advisor from the LGA.</p> <p>It is standard practice for initial feedback to be given to the Mayor, Chief Executive and Cabinet as a minimum. The Mayor and the Chief Executive were keen that everyone who had taken part in the peer review were invited to take part in the feedback session. This initial feedback was provided verbally by the Peer Review Team on the last day of the review and included an opportunity for attendees to ask questions.</p> <p>A formal report is scheduled to be published by the LGA in December.</p>

		<p>A draft action plan will be prepared to draw together the actions necessary to address the recommendations emerging from the Peer Review. Following Council / Mayoral approval it is planned to be published alongside the LGA Peer Review Report in December.</p>
<p><b>11.4</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Marc Francis</b></p>	<p>How many homeless families are still currently housed in B&amp;Bs beyond the six-week limit?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>229 as of 5/11/2023.</p> <p>Interventions to increase the use of more suitable temporary accommodation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with several accommodation suppliers to reduce the current use of expensive and short-term commercial hotel placements so that households are placed into more traditional temporary accommodation of better quality and with access to cooking provision, laundry and play facilities.</li> <li>• Secured accommodation in Lewisham consisting of 136 rooms with two shared lounges, open space, cooking facility. Residents moving in immediately.</li> <li>• A revised incentive package to landlords for private rented homes.</li> <li>• In August launched communications campaign via digital adverts, social media, bus stops, billboards, My East End, google) to attract more landlords to work us.</li> <li>• In September direct communications to all council leaseholders.</li> <li>• In November a landlord event was held in the Grocery's wing to engage with landlords on our offer.</li> <li>• A review of the Placement Policy that informs where the council finds accommodation for homeless households.</li> <li>• Modular homes on two sites.</li> <li>• Using decanted properties on regeneration sites for temporary accommodation; for example on Clichy estate.</li> </ul>

<p>11.5</p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussain</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member explain how he intends to generate much needed income from events in Victoria Park? Can he tell us how many events are being considered over the year, their capacities and how much does he expect to raise? I understand this money will go towards balancing the council budget as well as maintaining the park.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The lead member intends to generate much needed income from events in Victoria Park by increasing the number of events that can be held there and by raising the capacity threshold for events. This will allow for more commercial events to be held in the park, which will generate more revenue for the council. The council also expects to generate additional income from non music-focused events and community events that are delivered as part of a commercial events programme.</p> <p>The proposed changes, if approved by Cabinet, to the Major Events Policy would enable the Council to programme up to 12 major commercial events in Victoria Park per annum as opposed to the current 10 per annum (up to 8 event days at a capacity of up 49,999 and up to 4 events at a capacity of 39,999 per annum). In addition, it is proposed that the capacity threshold for a major event is reviewed. Currently any event with a capacity of 5,000 or more at anyone time is classified as a major event, which is much lower than other comparable boroughs and results in many events that would provide community benefits and additional income to the Council not being considered. To bring us in line with other boroughs, it is proposed that the lower threshold for a major event is increased from 5,000 or more attendees at any one time to 20,000 or more attendees at any one time. Furthermore, it is proposed that events that are non music focussed (food festivals, fairs, trade shows, comedy festivals etc) and community events delivered as part of a commercial events programme are not classified as major events.</p> <p>Through the proposed changes, residents will benefit form a wider selection of high quality and well managed events, cultural, community and recreational activities. Events also provide local economic benefit with All Points East providing £3,106,135 million in economic expenditure benefit to Tower Hamlets in 2022 and will enable the council to generate more income to support services. The level of income generated will be dependent on market conditions, the type of event proposals received and licensing. However, it is anticipated that for 24/25 a further £300,000 could be generated in addition to the service’s current income target of £1.588m. Event organisers would be</p>
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		responsible for all associated costs for delivering their events including security and cleansing costs.
11.6	<b>Question from Councillor Mufeedah Bustin</b>	<p>The Millwall Rugby Club serves a broad and diverse community on the Isle of Dogs. It has established a presence in Millwall arches which they have done up themselves and installed utilities to an underutilised shell. Please could the Mayor and Lead Member explain why the Millwall Rugby Club has received over a 100% increase in its rent for this year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question regarding Millwall Rugby Club.</p> <p>The Millwall Rugby Club's lease was for a term of 15 years from 31 July 2007, and expired on 30 July 2022. A lease renewal process was started, and the council requires a market rent to be paid under a new lease.</p> <p>The expired lease allowed for 3 years rent free period for the refurbishment of the property. The lease also included 3 yearly rent reviews, but these were not triggered, and the rent stayed the same at £4,000pa. If the reviews had been triggered, the rent would have been higher.</p> <p>The proposed new rent is at the rate of £14 psf. This is in line with the standard rate the Council charges community groups, as agreed by Cabinet in 2016. On this basis the new rent works out at £16,800 pa, which has been notified to the Club.</p>
11.7	<b>Question from Councillor Harun Miah</b>	<p>Can the lead member share feedback from secondary schools regarding the implementation of free school meal introduced by the Mayor this year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Mayor has ensured that Tower Hamlets Council is the first in the country to deliver Universal Free School Meals across both primary and secondary schools. This has been extremely well received by pupils, parents and schools alike. All 20 secondary schools are now delivering FSM and all 16 schools that needed capital investment to make this happen have been supported with this. The meal uptake rate at many schools has seen a drastic uplift. Even across schools that have seen a relatively slower start, the rate is steadily increasing. For example the uptake has already reached 92% at Phoenix, 84% at Mulberry Shoreditch and 75% at Swanlea. An on-going evaluation process is</p>

		<p>underway to assess the nutritional and educational benefits of free school meals.</p> <p>Feedback from schools has included the following:</p> <p><i>“I am seeing students that have never eaten, eat a meal. I am seeing students that used to share a plate with friends or other family members, now do not have to share a meal.”</i></p> <p><i>“Behaviour has drastically improved. Students are no longer angry due to being hungry.”</i></p> <p><i>“There is a significant upturn in students taking meals.”</i></p> <p><i>“Pupils are excited at the prospect of taking meals.”</i></p>
11.8	<p><b>Question from Councillor Asma Islam</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member provide me with the numbers of homes that have been built in the last year for social rent and how that compares against the council’s target?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>From Planning records the number of affordable homes built of which some are for social rent is set out below:</p> <p><u>2022-23</u></p> <p>Social Rent - 215  Affordable Rent – 256  Intermediate Rent - 114  Shared Ownership - 83</p> <p>Total: 668 (plus 116 affordable units for the LLDC area)</p> <p>So far in 2023-24 the homes built are:  Affordable Rent - 145  Intermediate rent and shared ownership - 65</p> <p>The 2023/24 figures are from returns to the council from Registered Providers and includes the council’s own completions. These will be verified by Planning at the end of the year.</p>
11.9	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ahmodul Kabir</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member update the council on the independent investigation into housing management following the complaint brought by 31 members of staff in the department?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The external investigation has now concluded. Raj Mistry, Corporate Director, Communities has met with staff to discuss the findings and a written response will be provided. He is working with managers to</p>

		agree an improvement plan and to pick up any actions arising from the investigation.
11.10	<b>Question from Councillor Asma Begum</b>	<p>Could the lead member provide me with the details of which contracts have been awarded in relation to the removal of the liveable streets scheme and which companies have been granted those contracts?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>No contracts have been awarded in relation to the removal of the liveable streets.</p>
11.11	<b>Question from Councillor Bodrul Choudhury</b>	<p>Can the lead member provide an update on Local Plan refresh and outline any significant changes which will help bring investment and the delivery of much needed housing?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The draft new Local Plan (Regulation 18) was approved for consultation by Cabinet on 25 October. This version has been informed by early engagement that was held from January 2023 to March 2023, as well as by findings from an updated and relevant evidence base, on-going discussions with the Mayor and his office, internal and external officers and regular internal and external stakeholder group meetings.</p> <p>The document has now officially started its consultation which will run for a 6 week period, from the 6 November to 18 December 2023. There will be area and theme-based presentation sessions, targeted outreach sessions, in person stakeholder workshop events / drop-in sessions (x7), online workshops (x7) + virtual drop-in sessions (x4), interactive StoryMap engagement, information on the Let's Talk website, TH_IS branding and a variety of publications providing key messages.</p> <p>The document is structured in six sections: Introduction, Setting the scene, Vision and objectives, Policies, Site allocations and Appendices.</p> <p>The 10 themes in the 'Policies' chapter are 1. Delivering the local plan, 2. Homes for the community, 3. Clean and green future, 4. People, places and spaces, 5. Inclusive economy and good growth, 6. Town centres, 7. Community infrastructure, 8. Biodiversity and open space, 9. Reuse, recycling and waste and 10. Movement and connectivity, and collectively there are 73 policies. Alongside the policies, there is guidance for 36 site allocations.</p> <p>Key changes to the Local Plan which will help bring investment and delivery of much needed housing are:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction of a new tall building zone, alongside a revised definition of ‘tall buildings’, as well as increased maximum heights, to provide opportunities for housing provision</li> <li>▪ Increased affordable housing requirement from 35% to 40%, to ensure a greater proportion of affordable housing is secured and delivered for schemes with 10 or more residential units</li> <li>▪ Increased (low-cost) social rent requirement from a 70/30 split to an 85/15 split, to again, ensure a greater proportion of affordable housing is delivered</li> <li>▪ Removal of unit mix for market + intermediate housing to allow the flexibility to meet the increased requirement for family sized units (3 bed+) in the social rent tenure of 65% (an increase from 45%)</li> <li>▪ Prioritising <i>planning use class C3</i>, social housing, over any other housing products such as student housing and co-living</li> <li>▪ Student housing to provide <i>planning use class C3</i> self-contained affordable housing</li> <li>▪ Changes in the preferred office location boundaries to allow residential to be introduced into these office areas</li> </ul>															
11.12	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ayas Miah</b></p>	<p>How many waste collections have been missed by the council since the end of the waste strikes?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The number of missed collections since the end of strike action are as follows –</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="560 1350 1506 1599"> <thead> <tr> <th>Service</th> <th>Per Property</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Organic Waste Service</td> <td>40</td> <td>0.05%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recycling Service</td> <td>717</td> <td>0.48%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residual Waste Service</td> <td>806</td> <td>0.49%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Grand Total</b></td> <td><b>1563</b></td> <td><b>1.02%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Service	Per Property	%	Organic Waste Service	40	0.05%	Recycling Service	717	0.48%	Residual Waste Service	806	0.49%	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1563</b>	<b>1.02%</b>
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11.13	<p><b>Question from Councillor Abdul Mannan</b></p>	<p>This Cost-of-Living crisis has seen the poorest and most vulnerable in Tower Hamlets hit hardest. Can the lead member tell us what measures are in place to support residents and how much financial assistance has been provided to date?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Tackling the cost-of-living crisis has been a focal point of LBTH’s work towards supporting low-income residents and tackling poverty in the borough. This has meant the delivery of a range of initiatives including</p>															



		<p>the allocation of more than 53,000 cash first payments to residents last financial year, a programme of support which provided more than £6m to residents identified by council data as being the most in need of support by using local authority funds alongside targeted application of the government's Household Support Fund (HSF).</p> <p>This financial year we have continued to provide a range of support; the LBTH Food Hub has provided 917 tonnes of food so the local food aid network can serve as a safety net for those in need, and our Resident Support Scheme has provided 2,750 crisis grants totalling over £900k, ensuring any resident regardless of benefit status can apply for crisis funding. Both of these projects are council-funded, but have been supplemented with this year's allocation of HSF, of which we have been awarded £5,992,559.</p> <p>With this funding we will be delivering £3.8m of targeted interventions and direct payments in the coming months to support a range of cohorts including families with children, low-income pensioners, homeless people and rough sleepers, vulnerable residents identified by adult social care, victims of domestic abuse and VAWG, and residents attending training and work-related support. Our upcoming network of community cupboards meanwhile will mean low-income families using our children's centres will be able to access the essentials needed to raise their young ones.</p> <p>This is in addition to the help available through the council tax reduction scheme, the Tackling Poverty Outreach team, the Resident Support Scheme, universal free school meals for children up to 16, school uniform grants, holiday activities for children in low-income families, the FOOD Store programme, delivery of the Education Maintenance Allowance and University Bursary schemes, and the funding of local voluntary groups focused on providing information and advice, and tackling the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>In order to help residents to seek help and advice the cost-of-living campaign was launched last year to communicate the wide range of support they can access - and this will soon be relaunched to make sure we are getting the best possible information out to our residents.</p>
11.14	<p><b>Question from Councillor Rebakah Sultana</b></p>	<p>How many meetings of The Mayor's Keep our Borough Moving forum have taken place and who currently sits on the forum/board?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Keep our Borough Moving forum has not yet met. Composition of this group is still being determined and will be communicated to members alongside meeting schedule in due course.</p>

11.15	<p><b>Question from Councillor Musthak Ahmed</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member provide an update on the ongoing work to address the service issues outlined in the waste emergency declared by the Mayor last year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>A plan that responds to the declaration of the waste emergency by the mayor last year, has been drafted but is being reviewed as its scope is not wide enough to provide long term sustainable improvements.</p> <p>An overarching plan the reviews all areas of service delivery is currently being drafted with a view to have it ready before the end of the year.</p>
11.16	<p><b>Question from Councillor Shubo Hussain</b></p>	<p>With THH now back in house, could the lead member outline the plans for properties that are currently in disrepair?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The management of legal disrepair cases will continue to be managed by the Repairs Service in the Housing Asset Management Division, supported by LBTH Legal Team.</p> <p>Disrepair cases are tracked and actions are monitored and reported. There are now two full time Disrepair Surveyors to meet the increased volume of claims in the last two years, arising from increased media interest and No Win No Fee claims agents operating in our borough.</p> <p>Seven new LBTH responsive repairs and maintenance contracts went live in 2022, which were managed by THH and continue to be managed by the repairs team now integrated within LBTH.</p> <p>Resources for repairs contract management and works delivery have been reviewed in 2022/23 and the establishment increased to align with a surge of recent activity. Recruitment is still ongoing to meet the increase in demand.</p>
11.17	<p><b>Question from Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member provide an update on how the Council is looking to maximise carbon offset funding for this year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The carbon offsetting mechanism to secure funds is included within the adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2021) which identifies that where the policy requirement for</p>

		<p>carbon emission reductions cannot be met on-site a financial contribution should be secured to cover all residual CO2 emissions.</p> <p>To maximise carbon offset funding the council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides pre-application planning advice on major development schemes to ensure applicants fully understand the net zero carbon requirements, and how to treat all residual emissions through S106 carbon offsetting</li> <li>• Reviews all energy strategies submitted to ensure appropriate carbon offsetting is secured within all major planning applications</li> <li>• Includes appropriate clauses within the development scheme S106 for delivery of the carbon offsetting contribution at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>• Reviews the mechanism in which S106 is secured to ensure the cost per tonne CO2 is appropriate for the time of the planning consent</li> </ul> <p>To maximise the benefit of the carbon offsetting funds cost efficiency is extremely important in identifying the projects to be delivered through the carbon offset fund. The CO2 emission reduction potential of the projects includes analysis of the cost per tonne CO2 over the lifetime of the projects, and in accordance with the LBTH adopted Planning Obligations SPD, the projects are designed to respond positively with the LBTH Carbon Offset Solutions Study and LBTH Zero Carbon Roadmap.</p> <p>To date the Council has delivered projects to support residential projects to make homes energy efficient to help alleviate fuel poverty, supported small businesses to improve the energy efficiency of their premises, supported schools with carbon reduction projects, and most recently delivered a community energy grants programme to support community groups and organisations to deliver community led energy and carbon reductions projects.</p>
11.18	<p><b>Question from Councillor James King</b></p>	<p>What discussions have the council had with TfL about the impact of traffic on commercial road with the opening of Silvertown Tunnel and the tolling of the Blackwall tunnel.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>TfL have liaised with the borough regarding modelling of impact from the Silvertown Tunnel scheme and Blackwall Tunnel. The data provided to date does not indicate any negative impact on Commercial Road following opening of the Silvertown Tunnel and toll operation of Blackwall Tunnel. Nevertheless, officers continue to liaise with TfL on</p>

		<p>an ongoing basis to discuss the project and any impacts it may have on the borough's road network.</p>
<p>11.19</p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ahmodur Khan</b></p>	<p>Could the lead member provide an update on the progress of the insourcing of Tower Hamlets Homes to Council control?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>On 1 November all housing management services transferred back to the council and the Management Agreement between the Council and Tower Hamlets Homes ended.</p> <p>The Council is now responsible for managing and maintaining all council homes. This includes repairs, maintenance, improvements, caretaking, gardening and rent and service charge collections.</p> <p>Services have initially transferred in a 'lift and shift' approach (i.e., maintaining the existing roles and workforce). Two new divisions have been created in the Housing and Regeneration directorate: Neighbourhood Services and Housing Asset Management. Meanwhile, Human Resources, Communications, Health and Safety, Executive Support, and Finance have welcomed transferred staff into their service.</p> <p>Residents are at the heart of the new service. By bringing it in house we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join-up housing and other council services for a better resident experience.</li> <li>• Ensure council homes are safe, well-managed and sustainable, with a focus on reducing damp, mould, and overcrowding.</li> <li>• Invest in our homes and build new ones including family sized homes.</li> <li>• Give residents a strong voice to help improve standards.</li> <li>• Ensure the council is ready for the new regulatory standards including improved fire and building safety.</li> </ul> <p>There is no change in the way residents should interact with us following the transfer. They should continue to request repairs and contact housing management services as always have done - using the same phone number, email addresses and online services. There are also not any changes to tenants and leaseholders' rights.</p>

11.20	<p><b>Question from Councillor Amina Ali</b></p>	<p>How much did the council spend on private waste contractors during strike action taken by Unite? And what are the names of the companies who were awarded those contracts?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council spent £342,815 on additional clearance to address health and safety issues using private waste collection companies. The names of the companies are Bywaters Waste and Recycling and P.F. Ahern (London) Ltd.</p>
11.21	<p><b>Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah</b></p>	<p>When are the consultations for the latest proposals for St Georges Pool coming forward?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Public consultations are planned to engage with residents and stakeholders on the designs for the new leisure facilities and residential accommodation. The first consultation event took place on <b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023</b> between 4pm-8pm.</p> <p>Please see below dates of the consultation events to take place:</p> <p><b>12<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>  <b>7<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>  <b>4<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b></p> <p>Lead Members and local ward members will be invited to these drop-in sessions and will be offered a personal briefing session on the scheme if required.</p>
11.22	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sabina Akhtar</b></p>	<p>What discussions has the Mayor had with the trustees of the Stifford Centre about its proposed redevelopment?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>On the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 a meeting was held with the Stifford Centre (the Centre), since then there has been a number of meetings with the staff/trustees, and a number of ongoing public engagement exercises to discuss the proposed development where the Centre's trustees have been present.</p> <p>There has also been a public engagement exercise consisting of two public events, one of which was held on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at the Centre where officers had discussions with the Centre's trustees/staff, on the latest proposal and listened to their concerns.</p>

11.23	<b>Question from Councillor Leelu Ahmed</b>	<p>The new playground Rhodeswell Road has been unfinished for months, when will it be completed?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>We are expecting completion of the playground by the end of November 2023.</p>
11.24	<b>Question from Councillor Faroque Ahmed</b>	<p>Could the lead member provide a final financial figure for the costs of refurbishment of the mayor's office?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The cost of the refurbishment of the Mayor's office was £25,037. Furniture, fixtures and equipment are not included in this figure.</p>
11.25	<b>Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam</b>	<p>What is the council's current social rent policy, and can the council confirm if it has been modified in the last year?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The rental policy has not changed. Council tenants are charged social rent. Existing policy on new homes are let at either Tower Hamlets Living Rent (THLR) or London Affordable Rent (LAR) if they received GLA grant funding as part of the 2016-21 programme and will be a mix of THLR and social rent if receiving as part of the 2021-26 programme. Homes produced by the Council without GLA grant are let on a 50-50% split between THLR and LAR in line with policy or to reflect the above transition by the GLA with its phasing out of LAR. The policy will be reviewed as part of the updating of the Council's Local Plan.</p>
11.26	<b>Question from Councillor Sabina Khan</b>	<p>What action is being taken by the council to work with the multi-faith forum to recognise and welcome the diverse nature of communities across the borough?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council recognises and values the important role of faith organisations in Tower Hamlets. Faith-based activities in Tower Hamlets contributes to the cultural, social, and moral fabric of this community, providing individuals with the tools and support they need to lead prosperous lives. During crises, faith-based organisations are often among the first to provide humanitarian aid, comfort, and support to affected communities. Faith-based organisations often initiate and</p>

		<p>support economic and community development projects that benefit both their congregations and the broader community.</p> <p>The Council has commissioned Coventry University and Faith Action to support the Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum which promotes better communication and understanding among the various faiths in the borough. The forum convenes once every two months and is overseen by a small steering group. The current Chair of the Forum is Sufia Alam from London Muslim Centre following the departure of Alan Green.</p> <p>The Council also commissions and provides grants to faith based organisations for non-faith related activities. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor’s Community Grants – Grants to faith based organisations to support cohesion and support to older people</li> <li>• Mosque engagement project</li> <li>• Faith health action partnership</li> </ul> <p>Faith based organisations are also key partners in our community safety forums such as No Place for Hate Forum and Tension Monitoring Group and play key role in reducing hate crime and address local and national issues. For example in the current war on Gaza faith organisations have played a key role in managing community tensions.</p> <p>The Council also works with faith communities to support refugees and migrants. For example when Home Office allocated sites in Tower Hamlets to hold Afghan refugees work was undertaken with faith based organisations to support their needs.</p> <p>The Council recognises the important role faith plays in the lives of our residents and values the partnership with faith organisations.</p>
<p><b>11.27</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Peter Golds</b></p>	<p>May I be provided with the number and types of new electric vehicle chargers installed by LBTH each calendar year since 2020 and so far this year to the end of October 2023?</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The following electric charging points were installed over the three-year period;</p> <p>20/21: 53 charging points  21/22: 148 charging points  22/23: 0 charging points  23/24: 0 charging points</p>

**11.28 Question from Councillor Nathalie Bienfait**

“The response to my previous question regarding the number of homes which meet the decent homes standard has elicited a follow-up.

You said:

“The council has a duty to review local housing conditions and identify appropriate action that may be required across properties which may be hazardous. Following a service request or complaint about poor housing conditions from any resident within the private or social rented sector, council officers will undertake a review with an initial risk assessment will normally be carried out. The council will take further action to deal with health and safety concerns or issues which cause a statutory nuisance.”

Could you please provide data for the last 5 years on how many service requests, complaints and reviews have been conducted by housing officers of LBTH in relation to this kind of complaint?”

**Response**

The number of Service Requests/Complaints the Health and Housing Team have received within the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service are:

Year	Service Requests	Inspections/Visits
19/20	1092	922
20/21	1159	104
21/22	1039	887
22/23	933	2109
23/24	612	1711
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4835</b>	<b>5733</b>

Please note that in 20/21 and 21/22 inspections/visits were not undertaken due to covid requirements.