

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.08 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2024

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 Sabina Khan (Member)
Councillor Asma Begum (Member)	Councillor James King (Member)
Councillor Maisha Begum (Member)	Councillor Amy Lee (Member)
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait (Member)	Councillor Abdul Malik (Member)
Councillor Rachel Blake (Member)	Councillor Abdul Mannan (Member)
Councillor Mufedah Bustin (Member)	Councillor Ana Miah (Member)
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Harun Miah (Member)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Amin Rahman (Member)
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Rebaka Sultana (Member)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Maium Talukdar (Member)
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Bellal Uddin (Member)
Councillor Marc Francis (Member)	Councillor Abdul Wahid (Member)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

During the meeting the Speaker of the Council agreed to change the order of business. Specifically, Agenda Item 6 was taken before Agenda Item 5. For clarity the minutes are presented in the order the items appeared on the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Abdal Ullah.

Councillor Ayas Miah joined the meeting online.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

Ms Jill Bayley, Head of Safeguarding – Legal Services advised that the Standards Advisory Committee had agreed to a general dispensation to all Councillors in respect of matters relating to the Council Tax and also Housing where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council. Members did not therefore have to declare a DPI in respect of these matters.

There were no other Declarations of Interest.

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

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury stated that he would provide an update on his activities at the next ordinary meeting of the Council on 20th March 2024.

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Best Value Inspection, the Corporate Peer Review, Awards the Council had been shortlisted for and the temporary appointment of Ms Linda Walker as the Director of Legal following the departure of Ms Fasan. The Chief Executive, Mr Steve Halsey read out the statement made by the Council following comments made in the national press about 'no go' areas.

4. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were no petitions listed for consideration for this meeting.

At this point the Speaker of the Council Proposed, seconded by Councillor Maium Talukdar, that under Procedure Rule 12.1 (c) the Order of Business be changed to take Agenda Item 6 (Designation of Monitoring Officer) before Agenda Item 5 (Budget and Council Tax 2024/25) due to the importance of having a Monitoring Officer in place before the main business of the meeting took place. This proposal was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

5. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

The Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and Cost of Living, **moved** the budget and council tax proposals of the Mayor and Executive as set out in the agenda pack, with Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning **seconding** the proposals. This included the amendments tabled at the meeting.

Councillor Marc Francis **moved** the Labour group amendment set out in the supplementary agenda, which was **seconded** by Councillor Sirajul Islam. Councillor Nathalie Bienfait also **moved** her amendment which was **seconded** by Councillor Peter Golds.

During the debate the Speaker of the Council adjourned the meeting from 21:39 to 21:48 due to disturbance from the public gallery. The Speaker then, in line with Paragraph 21 of the Council Procedure Rules, asked for the public gallery to be cleared for the remainder of the meeting.

Following debate, the amendments moved by Councillor Marc Francis and Councillor Nathalie Bienfait were put to a recorded vote and were rejected.

The substantive Budget Motion for 2024-25, including the Council Tax Resolution, the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Statements as well as the Capital Strategy report submitted by Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Councillor Saied Ahmed were put to a recorded vote and were **AGREED**.

Decision:

**Budget Motion:
Revenue 2024-27 and Capital 2024-27**

1. To note a General Fund Revenue Budget of £462.606m and approve a Council Tax (Band D) of £1,204.11 (Council share) for 2024-25 as set out in the motion and Council Tax Resolution attached at Annex 1 to this report. This incorporates a 2.99% increase to the Tower Hamlets element of Council Tax and a 2% Adult Social Care precept for 2024-25.
2. To note the GLA precept as set out in the Council Tax Resolution is subject to the approval of the GLA Assembly at their meeting scheduled for 22 February, any changes as a result of that meeting will be made known to Council before the date of this meeting.
3. To note the change in the budget report appendices to reflect the final Local Government Finance Settlement grant allocation for the Social Care Grant, Services Grant and Public Health Grant. (Annex 2 Appendix 1A, 1B, 2, 3A and 6)
4. To note the Capital Programme, Housing Revenue Account budget and Dedicated Schools budget.
5. Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy 2024-25 5. To adopt the Treasury Management Strategy Statement set out in Annex 3 Appendix A attached to this report.
6. To adopt the Investment Strategy Report set out in Annex 3 Appendix B attached to this report.
7. To adopt the Capital Strategy Report (which incorporates the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement) set out in Annex 3 Appendix C attached to this report. Section 25, Local Government Act 2003

8. To note the Section 151 officer's view on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, set out in section 2 of this report. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS)
9. To note that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme will remain unchanged for 2024-25.

**BUDGET COUNCIL
28 FEBRUARY 2024
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT 2024-25**

That Council:

1. Approve the Council Tax Resolution, detailed in Appendix A to this motion.
2. Agree a General Fund revenue budget of £462.606m and a Council Tax Requirement for Tower Hamlets in 2024-25 of £138.168m.
3. Agree the Council's 2024-25 Budget Report and 2024-27 Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Annex 2.
4. Agree the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy Report and Capital Strategy Report for 2024-25 set out in Annex 3.

Appendix A

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
COUNCIL 28 FEBRUARY 2024
COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION**

1. That the revenue estimates for 2024-25 be approved.
2. That it be noted that, at its meeting on 3 January 2024, Cabinet agreed 114,747 as its **Council Tax base** for the year 2024-25 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]
3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the council for the year 2024-25 in accordance with Section 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended and the Local Authorities (Alteration of Requisite Calculations) (England) Regulations 2011:
 - a) £1,477,223,042 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of The Act. [**Gross Expenditure**]
 - b) £1,339,055,032 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of The Act. [**Gross Income**]
 - c) £138,168,010 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of The Act, as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of The Act). [**Council Tax Requirement**]
 - d) £1,204.11 Being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of The Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. [**Council Tax**]
4. Being the amount given by multiplying the amount at 3(d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of The Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of The Act, as the amount to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands. **Tower Hamlets Council Tax:**

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£802.74	£936.53	£1,070.32	£1,204.11	£1,471.69	£1,739.27	£2,006.85	£2,408.22

5. That it be noted that for the year 2024-25 the **Greater London Authority (GLA)** has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£314.27	£366.64	£419.02	£471.40	£576.16	£680.91	£785.67	£942.80

6. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 4 and 5 above, the council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of **Council Tax for the year 2024-25** for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£1,117.01	£1,303.17	£1,489.34	£1,675.51	£2,047.85	£2,420.18	£2,792.52	£3,351.02

7. That the council hereby determines in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2024-25

is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. As the billing authority, the council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2024-25 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Results of Vote on Amendment moved by Councillor Marc Francis (Labour Group)	
Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Against
Councillor Sirajul Islam	For
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	For
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Against
Councillor Leelu Ahmed	For
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	Against
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Against
Councillor Saied Ahmed	Against
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	Against
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	Against
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	For
Councillor Amina Ali	For
Councillor Asma Begum	For
Councillor Maisha Begum	For
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	For
Councillor Rachel Blake	For
Councillor Mufeedah Bustin	For
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury	Against
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	Against
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	Against
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury	For
Councillor Marc Francis	For
Councillor Peter Golds	Abstain
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	Against
Councillor Kabir Hussain	Against
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	Against
Councillor Shubo Hussain	For
Councillor Asma Islam	For
Councillor Ahmodul Kabir	Against
Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled	Against
Councillor Ahmodur Khan	Against
Councillor Sabina Khan	For
Councillor James King	For
Councillor Amy Lee	For
Councillor Abdul Malik	Against
Councillor Abdul Mannan	Against
Councillor Ana Miah	Against
Councillor Ayas Miah	Online – Couldn't Vote
Councillor Harun Miah	Against
Councillor Amin Rahman	Against
Councillor Rebeka Sultana	For
Councillor Maium Talukdar	Against
Councillor Bellal Uddin	Against
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Absent – Apologies given
Councillor Abdul Wahid	Against
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (The Speaker of the Council)	Against
RESULT	FALLS

Results of Vote on Amendment moved by Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	
Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Against
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Against
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	Against
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Against
Councillor Leelu Ahmed	Against
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	Against
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Against
Councillor Saied Ahmed	Against
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	Against
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	Against
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	Against
Councillor Amina Ali	Against
Councillor Asma Begum	Against
Councillor Maisha Begum	Against
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	For
Councillor Rachel Blake	Against
Councillor Mufeedah Bustin	Against
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury	Against
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	Against
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	Against
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury	Against
Councillor Marc Francis	Against
Councillor Peter Golds	Abstain
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	Against
Councillor Kabir Hussain	Against
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	Against
Councillor Shubo Hussain	Against
Councillor Asma Islam	Against
Councillor Ahmodul Kabir	Against
Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled	Against
Councillor Ahmodur Khan	Against
Councillor Sabina Khan	Against
Councillor James King	Against
Councillor Amy Lee	Against
Councillor Abdul Malik	Against
Councillor Abdul Mannan	Against
Councillor Ana Miah	Against
Councillor Ayas Miah	Online – Couldn't Vote
Councillor Harun Miah	Against
Councillor Amin Rahman	Against
Councillor Rebeka Sultana	Against
Councillor Maium Talukdar	Against
Councillor Bellal Uddin	Against
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Absent – Apologies given
Councillor Abdul Wahid	Against
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (The Speaker of the Council)	Against
RESULT	FALLS

Results of Vote on main Budget Motion moved by Mayor Lutfur Rahman and Councillor Saied Ahmed	
Mayor Lutfur Rahman	For
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Against
Councillor Faroque Ahmed	Against
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	For
Councillor Leelu Ahmed	Against
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	For
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	For
Councillor Saied Ahmed	For
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	For
Councillor Suluk Ahmed	For
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	Against
Councillor Amina Ali	Against
Councillor Asma Begum	Against
Councillor Maisha Begum	Against
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	Abstain
Councillor Rachel Blake	Against
Councillor Mufedah Bustin	Against
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury	For
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	For
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	For
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury	Against
Councillor Marc Francis	Against
Councillor Peter Golds	Against
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	For
Councillor Kabir Hussain	For
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	For
Councillor Shubo Hussain	Against
Councillor Asma Islam	Against
Councillor Ahmodul Kabir	For
Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled	For
Councillor Ahmodur Khan	For
Councillor Sabina Khan	Against
Councillor James King	Against
Councillor Amy Lee	Against
Councillor Abdul Malik	For
Councillor Abdul Mannan	For
Councillor Ana Miah	For
Councillor Ayas Miah	Online – Couldn't vote
Councillor Harun Miah	For
Councillor Amin Rahman	For
Councillor Rebeka Sultana	Against
Councillor Maium Talukdar	For
Councillor Bellal Uddin	For
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Absent – Apologies given
Councillor Abdul Wahid	For
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (The Speaker of the Council)	For
RESULT	CARRIES

6. DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER

Mr Steve Halsey, Chief Executive asked Council to note that he had appointed Linda Walker as an Interim Director for Legal Services following the departure of the previous Director.

This post would usually carry the designation of Monitoring Officer and Council was asked to endorse Linda Walker being designated as such. Following the debate Members **AGREED** to:

1. Endorse the appointment of Linda Walker as the designated Monitoring Officer for the Council.

The meeting ended at 10.08 p.m.

Speaker of the Council