



Meeting of the

TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Wednesday, 13th April 2011 at 7.30 p.m.

A G E N D A

VENUE

Council Chamber, 1st Floor,
Town Hall, Mulberry Place,
5 Clove Crescent,
London E14 2BG

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact:

John S Williams, Service Head, Democratic Services
Tel: 020 7364 4204, E-mail: johns.williams@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Chief Executive's
Directorate

Democratic Services
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG

Tel **020 7364 4204**
Fax **020 7364 3232**

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

**TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER
HAMLETS**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to be held in **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG** at 7.30 p.m. on **WEDNESDAY, 13TH APRIL 2011**

Kevan Collins
Chief Executive

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 13TH APRIL 2011

7.30 p.m.

	PAGE NUMBER
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	1 - 2
To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. See attached note from the Chief Executive.	
3. MINUTES	3 - 76
To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 2 nd February 2011, the Budget Council meeting held on 23 rd February 2011 and the Extraordinary Budget Council meeting held on 8 th March 2011.	
4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
5. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS	77 - 78
The deadline for receipt of petitions to be presented to this meeting is noon on Thursday 7 th April 2011.	
At the time of agenda despatch, one petition had been received as set out in the attached report. Any further valid petitions received before the deadline will be notified to Members in advance of the meeting.	
6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	79 - 80
The questions which have been received from members of the public to be put at this meeting are set out in the attached report.	
A maximum period of 20 minutes is allocated to this agenda item.	

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

In accordance with the Council's Constitution as amended, provision is made at each ordinary Council meeting for the Elected Mayor to give a report.

A maximum of five minutes is allowed for the Elected Mayor's report, following which the Chair of Council will give the respective political group leaders an opportunity to respond for up to one minute each if they wish.

8. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL 81 - 84

The questions which have been received from Councillors to be put at this meeting are set out in the attached report.

A maximum period of 30 minutes is allocated to this agenda item.

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

There is no business to conduct under this agenda item.

10. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

There is no business to conduct under this agenda item.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

11 .1 Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12 85 - 94

To adopt the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2011/12. The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) is attached.

11 .2 Calendar of Meetings 2011/12 95 - 98

To agree the calendar of Council, Committee and other meetings for 2011/12. The report of the Service Head, Democratic Services is attached.

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL 99 - 106

The motions submitted by Councillors for debate at this meeting are set out in the attached report.

Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This note is guidance only. Members should consult the Council's Code of Conduct for further details. Note: Only Members can decide if they have an interest therefore they must make their own decision. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending at a meeting.

Declaration of interests for Members

Where Members have a personal interest in any business of the authority as described in paragraph 4 of the Council's Code of Conduct (contained in part 5 of the Council's Constitution) then s/he must disclose this personal interest as in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Code. Members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting and certainly no later than the commencement of the item or where the interest becomes apparent.

You have a **personal interest** in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- (a) An interest that you must **register**
- (b) An interest that is not on the register, but where the well-being or financial position of you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association, is likely to be affected by the business of your authority more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision.

Where a personal interest is declared a Member may stay and take part in the debate and decision on that item.

What constitutes a prejudicial interest? - Please refer to paragraph 6 of the adopted Code of Conduct.

Your personal interest will also be a prejudicial interest in a matter if (a), (b) and either (c) or (d) below apply:-

- (a) A member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think that your personal interests are so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interests; AND
- (b) The matter does not fall within one of the exempt categories of decision listed in paragraph 6.2 of the Code; AND EITHER
- (c) The matter affects your financial position or the financial interest of a body with which you are associated; or
- (d) The matter relates to the determination of a licensing or regulatory application

The key points to remember if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting:-

- i. You must declare that you have a prejudicial interest, and the nature of that interest, as soon as that interest becomes apparent to you; and
- ii. You must leave the room for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision unless (iv) below applies; and

- iii. You must not seek to improperly influence a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.
- iv. If Members of the public are allowed to speak or make representations at the meeting, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, by statutory right or otherwise (e.g. planning or licensing committees), you can declare your prejudicial interest but make representations. However, you must immediately leave the room once you have finished your representations and answered questions (if any). You cannot remain in the meeting or in the public gallery during the debate or decision on the matter.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2011

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

Members Present:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed	Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shelina Aktar	Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Councillor Craig Aston	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Lutfu Begum	Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer
Councillor Mizan Chaudhury	Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zara Davis	Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor Gloria Thienel
Councillor Judith Gardiner	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Carlo Gibbs	Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Amy Whitelock

The Chair of Council, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman, in the Chair

Mr Reg Ward

Before commencing the formal business on the agenda, the Chair of Council said that Members would be aware of the recent sad death of Mr Reg Ward who was the first Chief Executive of the London Docklands Development Corporation and who had made a significant contribution to the regeneration of that part of the borough.

At the Chair's invitation the Council, officers and public gallery rose to observe a minute's silence in Mr Ward's memory.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Abdul Asad, Shiria Khatun, Mohammed Abdul Mukit and Zenith Rahman.

RESOLVED

That the apologies be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made declarations of interest on items included on the agenda as follows:

Councillor	Item	Type of interest	Reason
Kabir Ahmed	12.5	Personal	I sat on the Strategic Development Committee that allocated 2.1 million to Rich Mix
Ohid Ahmed	8.1	Personal	Wife works for Jagonari
Mizanur Chaudhury	12.5	Prejudicial	Board Member on Rich Mix
Alibor Choudhury	12.2	Personal	Ward Councillor for Shadwell
Zara Davis	12.2	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
Zara Davis	12.6	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
David Edgar	5.3	Personal	I signed the petition
David Edgar	12.2	Personal	I signed the petition
David Edgar	12.6	Personal	I signed the petition
Peter Golds	5.3	Personal	Ward Councillor and local resident
Shafiqul Haque	12.5	Personal	I was Lead Member for Regeneration and sitting on the Rich Mix Board
Carli Harper-Penman	12.5	Personal	Member of the Strategic Development Committee that allocated funds to Rich Mix and also a member of the Rich Mix Board in 2006
Denise Jones	5.1	Personal	I have signed the petition
Denise Jones	5.3	Personal	I have signed the petition
Denise Jones	12.2	Personal	I have signed the petition
Denise Jones	12.5	Prejudicial	I am a member of the Board of Rich Mix
Denise Jones	12.6	Personal	I have signed the petition

Anwar Khan	5.2	Personal	Olga SureStart Centre is in my ward
Rabina Khan	12.2	Personal	Ward Councillor for Shadwell
Anna Lynch	12.5	Personal	Rich Mix is in my ward
Maium Miah	12.2	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
Maium Miah	12.6	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
Lesley Pavitt	5.3	Personal	I signed the petition
Lesley Pavitt	12.2	Personal	I signed the petition
Lesley Pavitt	12.6	Personal	I signed the petition
Joshua Peck	5.3	Personal	I signed the petition
Joshua Peck	12.2	Personal	I signed the petition
Joshua Peck	12.6	Personal	I signed the petition
Rachael Saunders	5.3	Personal	I signed the petition
Rachael Saunders	12.2	Personal	I signed the petition
Rachael Saunders	12.5	Prejudicial	Board Member of Rich Mix
Rachael Saunders	12.6	Personal	I signed the petition
David Snowdon	12.2	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
David Snowdon	12.6	Personal	Ward Councillor for Millwall
Bill Turner	12.4	Personal	I am a member of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign
Motin Uz-Zaman	6.3	Personal	Board member, East End Homes

3. MINUTES

The Service Head, Democratic Services stated that he had been asked by Councillor Rachael Saunders to read out a short statement to correct the record in reference to the meeting sought by Jim Fitzpatrick MP and Rushanara Ali MP with the Mayor. The Mayor was formally invited to the meeting on the 23rd November, and did not formally accept or refuse the invitation in advance of the meeting. Councillor Saunders regrets passing on inaccurate information given to her in good faith.

RESOLVED

That subject to the above, the minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 8th December 2010 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair of Council be authorised to sign them accordingly.

4. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**1) Young Mayor elections**

The Chair of Council said that his first announcement concerned the recent Young Mayor elections which took place on 25th January 2011. There had been an excellent turnout of 52% and it gave him great pleasure to congratulate and welcome to the meeting the new Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets, Nahimul Islam and his deputies Tasmina Khanum and Nadeem Miah. The outgoing Young Mayor, Landry Adelard was unable to attend the meeting and the Chair therefore invited his Deputy, Tahmina Begum to address the Council.

Miss Tahmina Begum addressed Members about her year in office as Deputy Young Mayor.

2) Freedom of the Borough

The Chair of Council said that Members would be aware that as part of the recent Constitutional amendments, the Chair of Council's Panel was re-established to consider and make recommendations on any proposal to award the Freedom of the Borough to persons who have given imminent service to Tower Hamlets. The Chair informed the Council that he intended to call a Special meeting of the Council on 23rd February 2011 to consider the Freedom of the Borough.

5. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS**5.1 Petition from Mr. Matthew Smith and others re: touting on Brick Lane**

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Mr. Matthew Smith and Mr. Philip Vracas addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and replied to questions from Members.

Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor responded to the petition. Councillor Ahmed said that he was totally against any form of touting for custom by restaurants. It was tainting the reputation of the borough. The Council had so far prosecuted over 70 touts and was taking action against 7 businesses for touting offences and seeking a review of their licences.

The Council was committed to rid the Brick Lane area of touting and Council officers would work with the police raising the levels of enforcement especially targeted at persistent offenders.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

5.2 Petition from Parents, Grandparents, Carers and Children of Olga SureStart Centre opposing the closure of the centre

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Mr. Pierre Fabri and Ms. Raquel Aguado addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and replied to questions from Members.

Councillor Oliur Rahman, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, thanked the petitioners for coming to the meeting. As a parent himself he was looking forward to sending his daughter to a centre in the borough and wanted to make it clear that no children centres in Tower Hamlets would be closing. The centres would be made more efficient, no frontline workers would be losing their jobs and in some cases family support would be increased. If anyone had any concerns, both Councillor Rahman and the Mayor would be happy to meet and discuss these.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Acting Corporate Director, Children, Schools and Families for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

5.3 Petition from the Save King Edward Park Campaign re: Thames Water's proposed works at the park

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Ms. Emma Dunsire addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and replied to questions from Members.

Change to order of business

Councillor Rabina Khan then **MOVED** and Councillor Alibor Choudhury **SECONDED** – "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow motion 12.2 to be considered after item 5.3."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and **agreed**.

Mayor Lutfur Rahman thanked the petitioner for bringing the petition to the Council meeting. He stated that he took seriously the concerns raised and lessons had been learnt from the Crossrail saga. All opportunities needed to be explored to negate the impact on the community and the Mayor was happy work with Ms. Dunsire and officers to make sure that all current suggestions were looked at and to work with the Ward Councillors get a solution.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

12.2 Motion proposed by Councillor Rabina Khan regarding King Edward VII Memorial Park

With the consent of the meeting under Procedure Rule 15.8.1, Councillor Rabina Khan altered the text of her motion.”

Councillor Rabina Khan **MOVED**, and Councillor Alibor Choudhury **SECONDED** the revised motion as follows:–

“The Council notes:

1. That Thames Water is planning to deface one of Tower Hamlets key community assets, King Edward VII Memorial Park, a landmark of the East End both for its historical significance and its social value;
2. That at present the park is well used by the community all year round and it provides an oasis in an area where green spaces are scarce;
3. That King Edward VII Memorial Park is vital to the community life of Shadwell, Wapping, Limehouse and Stepney and that damaging it in any way or reducing its accessibility and possibility of enjoyment for any period of time would bear an immediate and irreparable impact on said communities;

The Council recognises:

1. The extensive proposed works will damage the mature vegetation and wildlife habitats beyond repair and will make the park, its amenities and the Thames river path unusable for the duration of the Tunnel build;
2. Once the works are completed, the community will be left with a concrete promontory on the foreshore and huge buildings that will deface the beautiful riverfront, spoil the park view completely and erode the use the community makes of the park and its inherent heritage value;
3. That the proposed Thames Water plans for the park and its foreshore are unacceptable as the impact they will cause far outweighs the benefits it would bring to Tower Hamlets’ community;
4. That there are alternative Brownfield sites that Thames Water has failed to examine;

5. That Thames Water's current plans for construction in King Edward VII Memorial Park and on its foreshore appear to be in blatant contravention of the approved Council's strategy for open spaces based on the principles of impact on health, quality of life and preservation of biodiversity;

The Council resolves:

1. To protect King Edward VII Memorial Park and its foreshore from Thames Water's proposed plans and any future plan that may damage the park and the use the community makes of it;
2. To oppose and challenge to the full extent of its capacity said plans at every level of consultation and to obtain independent technical advice to support the continuing scrutiny of emerging proposals;
3. To continue to oppose and challenge Thames Water to use Brownfield sites where sustainable and technically feasible."

Councillor Dr. Emma Jones **MOVED**, and Councillor Zara Davis **SECONDED**, a tabled **amendment** to the motion as follows:-

"Further to 'This Council notes', insert:

4. That Thames Water is planning an upgrade of London's sewer system and has recently consulted on a number of proposed routes for the proposed Thames Tunnel sewer from Tower Hill to the sewage treatment works at Beckton;
5. That King Edward VII Memorial Park was opened in 1922 by King George V and has been one of the green lungs of the borough for nearly 90 years.

Further to 'The Council recognises', add:

6. That Thames Water's preferred 'Abbey Mill' route includes overflow points on the foreshore of the King Edward VII Memorial Park in Shadwell, and part of the back of Narrow Street;
7. That Narrow Street is a historical thoroughfare through Shadwell and Limehouse, containing rare examples of Georgian terracing;
8. That the alternative 'River Thames' route includes shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road;
9. That the borough has a shortage of open space and that the area around Sir John McDougal Gardens is one of the most densely populated in the borough;

10. That Thames Water has also shortlisted sites at Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane.

Further to 'The Council resolves', add:

4. To object to the River Thames route which would involve shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road;
5. To object to the shortlisting of the Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane sites;
6. To call upon Thames Water to give consideration to the many public objections to the proposed route via Shadwell and Limehouse, and the alternative River Thames route via Millwall;
7. To ensure that the Executive Mayor meets with Thames Water to discuss the route of the Thames Tunnel and to urge them to rule out the proposed route and the River Thames route in favour of the alternative via Rotherhithe."

Following debate, Councillor Rabina Khan indicated that she accepted the amendment moved by Councillor Dr Emma Jones.

The substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote and was **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

The Council notes:

1. That Thames Water is planning to deface one of Tower Hamlets key community assets, King Edward VII Memorial Park, a landmark of the East End both for its historical significance and its social value;
2. That at present the park is well used by the community all year round and it provides an oasis in an area where green spaces are scarce;
3. That King Edward VII Memorial Park is vital to the community life of Shadwell, Wapping, Limehouse and Stepney and that damaging it in any way or reducing its accessibility and possibility of enjoyment for any period of time would bear an immediate and irreparable impact on said communities;
4. That Thames Water is planning an upgrade of London's sewer system and has recently consulted on a number of proposed routes for the proposed Thames Tunnel sewer from Tower Hill to the sewage treatment works at Beckton;
5. That King Edward VII Memorial Park was opened in 1922 by King George V and has been one of the green lungs of the borough for nearly 90 years.

The Council recognises:

1. The extensive proposed works will damage the mature vegetation and wildlife habitats beyond repair and will make the park, its amenities and the Thames river path unusable for the duration of the Tunnel build;
2. Once the works are completed, the community will be left with a concrete promontory on the foreshore and huge buildings that will deface the beautiful riverfront, spoil the park view completely and erode the use the community makes of the park and its inherent heritage value;
3. That the proposed Thames Water plans for the park and its foreshore are unacceptable as the impact they will cause far outweighs the benefits it would bring to Tower Hamlets' community;
4. That there are alternative Brownfield sites that Thames Water has failed to examine;
5. That Thames Water's current plans for construction in King Edward VII Memorial Park and on its foreshore appear to be in blatant contravention of the approved Council's strategy for open spaces based on the principles of impact on health, quality of life and preservation of biodiversity;
6. That Thames Water's preferred 'Abbey Mill' route includes overflow points on the foreshore of the King Edward VII Memorial Park in Shadwell, and part of the back of Narrow Street;
7. That Narrow Street is a historical thoroughfare through Shadwell and Limehouse, containing rare examples of Georgian terracing;
8. That the alternative 'River Thames' route includes shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road;
9. That the borough has a shortage of open space and that the area around Sir John McDougal Gardens is one of the most densely populated in the borough;
10. That Thames Water has also shortlisted sites at Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane.

The Council resolves:

1. To protect King Edward VII Memorial Park and its foreshore from Thames Water's proposed plans and any future plan that may damage the park and the use the community makes of it;

2. To oppose and challenge to the full extent of its capacity said plans at every level of consultation and to obtain independent technical advice to support the continuing scrutiny of emerging proposals;
3. To continue to oppose and challenge Thames Water to use Brownfield sites where sustainable and technically feasible;
4. To object to the River Thames route which would involve shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road;
5. To object to the shortlisting of the Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane sites;
6. To call upon Thames Water to give consideration to the many public objections to the proposed route via Shadwell and Limehouse, and the alternative River Thames route via Millwall;
7. To ensure that the Executive Mayor meets with Thames Water to discuss the route of the Thames Tunnel and to urge them to rule out the proposed route and the River Thames route in favour of the alternative via Rotherhithe.

6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

6.1 Question from Mr. Richard Desmond re: A Pride March for East London in 2011

“The group Out East is working to establish solidarity and build community among people who identify as Lesbian, Queer, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender or who are questioning issues about sexuality or gender identity in Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham. Thus in the face of homophobic prejudice and hate crimes, it is this group's intention to have a Pride March from Hackney into Tower Hamlets late this summer and we would like to end the march with an event in Victoria Park, it expected to be less than 2000 people for under three hours on a Saturday afternoon. We ask that the Mayor help facilitate this with the use of the park to and show his support for this campaign against all hate crimes and in solidarity with the diverse communities of our borough.”

Response of the Mayor

I support any initiative that aims to promote tolerance and community cohesion. You can apply to the Council's Arts and Events Service for permission. However, I should warn you that some Labour Councillors, especially in Bow West, have been very vocal about limiting the number of events in Victoria Park.

As Mayor, I would be happy to work with you to overcome their objections.

Point of personal explanation

Councillor Joshua Peck rose to give a personal explanation as the Mayor had referred to Labour Councillors in Bow West in his response. The Mayor had stated that they wished to limit the number of events in Victoria Park. Councillor Peck stated that this related to commercial events and the Councillors' motion had made it clear that they were in support of community events.

Summary of supplementary question from Mr. Desmond:

I am the Chair of the Victoria Park Friends Group. This is not a big event with only 2,000 people expected whereas other events have up to 8,000 attendees. Will the Mayor support our use of the park?

Summary of the Mayor's response:

I fully support your endeavours. Please make your application and officers will look at it on its own merits.

6.2 Question from Mr. Ahmed Hussain re: creation of more jobs in the borough

"Can the Mayor kindly let us know how is he progressing in creating more jobs in the borough?"

Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member, Regeneration

Creating new jobs and connecting out of work residents to new jobs is one of mayor's five main priorities. As at December 2010, there has been an increase of over 5 per cent in the employment rate. This means that there are an additional 800 residents in work. This is great news and the early initiatives pursued by the council have played a part in the change.

We are refreshing the Employment Strategy brought in by Cllr Choudhury under a previous administration and supported by the mayor when he was leader. It is being reworked to respond to the new economic environment and the government's changes to the welfare to work programmes. This administration is engaging robustly with the Prime contractors for the new Single Work Programme – to ensure that they are responding to the needs of Tower Hamlets' residents and our commitment to put more people into work.

Summary of supplementary question from Mr. Hussain:

I do not think that Cabinet Members know that I regularly do enquiries as a resident. I have found there will be 500 job losses at this Council

with a net of 250. In the previous Council, the Mayor was the Leader and he knows about the problems. Is it not misleading to say on the Mayor's webpage that new jobs will be created?

Summary of Cabinet Member's response:

It is easy to blame the Mayor but in fact it is your Government that is implementing these cuts.

6.3 Question from Mr. John Wright re: East End Homes

"As a resident of the Glamis Estate E1 which is managed by East End Homes, I and many other residents including residents of other East End Homes estates are deeply concerned that the views of these residents are not being represented. We feel this could be due to poor attendance by Councillors. Could we be informed of their attendance records since appointment to the board of EEH and I also seek help from the council on the lack of transparency and information from EEH main Board?"

Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing

I know you well and you do a tremendous amount of work for the Glamis Estate TRA. The TRA ensures that the concerns of residents, in particular vulnerable residents like older people are voiced and heard. The Mayor and I feel very strongly that tenants and leaseholders have a right to have a meaningful say on how estates are managed and maintained.

I understand that a consultation took place on estate by EEH and the estate decided that they would not sign up to the consultation. I want to work with you to ensure that EEH is engaging residents effectively and that members are holding the Board to account. I would be happy to meet with you and any other Councillors to work with the Mayor to iron out any issues that may exist.

Summary of supplementary question from Mr. Wright:

Is the Council happy with the current situation? The Chief Executive of East End Homes is an ex-LBTH worker. There is a lack of transparency and representation at East End Homes in stark contrast with Tower Hamlets Homes and Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

Summary of Cabinet Member's response:

I would like to work with you and East End Homes to iron out these issues and to hold the RSL to account. We also need to ensure that rents are not increased unduly and that tenants are well looked after.

6.4 Question from Ms. Anna Begum re: increase in the number of Tesco stores across the borough

“Like many residents, I am concerned at the increase in the number of Tescos across the borough. I am worried that the Council may have been unduly influenced by big business. Can you confirm whether any councillors are either linked to Tesco directly or work for organisations responsible for lobbying and other public affairs/public relations work on behalf of Tesco?”

Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member, Regeneration

I share your concern at the sudden increase in supermarket chain shops across the borough. However, I am informed by officers that the Council has no power to control who operates shops other than the shops that the Council owns within its own housing estates that it still manages.

All Councillors are required to declare who they work for and this information is on the website. The Code of Conduct for Members within the Council's Constitution requires that Members must declare interests when sitting at committee.

Summary of supplementary question:

Is it true that Councillor Joshua Peck is lobbying for the company and for Crossrail as clients of his company?

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Joshua Peck replied to the supplementary question.

Councillor Peck stated that the allegation was entirely false and without foundation. The Scottish office of his company had undertaken some work for Tesco in Scotland only. Councillor Peck had no contact with any representative of Tesco in a professional capacity. Officers had confirmed that the Council had received no planning applications from Tesco since Councillor Peck was elected to the Council with the exception of Gladstone Place, and that application pre-dated Councillor Peck joining his current employment. Councillor Peck had declared a personal interest in the Gladstone Place application as the former Lead Member responsible for Assets. Councillor Peck stated that he found it reprehensible that a known supporter of the Mayor should attempt to slur a member of the Council in this way.

7. ELECTED MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor made his report to the Council meeting. He referred to the forthcoming Budget Council meeting to be held on 23rd February 2011. In

developing budget savings proposals the Mayor felt that there was a moral duty on Members to protect frontline services, and achieve the savings by working more smartly and efficiently and streamlining management. He had had regular meetings with the Trade Unions and held Road Shows to meet Council staff.

He was also proud to say that the improvement to schools programme was pushing ahead and at the last Cabinet meeting a new site had been identified for a new secondary school in Bow Lock in 2014. At the next Cabinet meeting, the Blackwall Reach development would be discussed.

Finally, the Mayor said that he had taken part in an event which highlighted the work being undertaken by the Child Protection Team and Social Workers and Tower Hamlets had been chosen for its ground breaking approach and for providing top class services. He called on all Members to work constructively to ensure that the residents received the service they deserved.

The Leader of the Majority Group, Leaders of the Minority Groups and Councillor Stephanie Eaton each responded briefly to the Mayor's report.

8. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

8.1 Question from Councillor Joshua Peck

"Can the Mayor tell me what he believes is the right number of Children's Centres for Tower Hamlets?"

Response by Cabinet Member, Children's Services, Councillor Oliur Rahman

Children's centres are a key and important part of the welfare state and our services for children. We must applaud the labour government for their investment this has transformed provision for children under 5. Delivering excellent services to children under five has a big impact on their long term success and well being. We should be proud of our services to and the provision in the borough. I want to thank all our staff who work to support our young children.

- Currently the LA is responsible for 23 designated children's centres (developed by the previous government).
- These designations currently provide direct services to children under 5 in 85 venues across Tower Hamlets
- The DfE have removed the need for designated Children's centres
- Our proposed structure reduces the number of management and administration posts whilst increasing the provision of frontline services to families
- The four locality areas (based on paired LAPs) will continue to deliver direct services to children under 5 in the same 85 venues.
- None of these delivery venues will close

- 12 of these delivery venues will become Community Hubs
- Key staff will be based at each Community Hub, including a Community Lead officer, Family Support Officers and Play and Learning workers.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Joshua Peck:

I am concerned that the Cabinet Member has not given a clear answer. Can he confirm that the Council will not be rationing the service and that the centres will remain open to everyone with no reduction in service. Is it proposed to cut the jobs of vital staff members?

Summary of Cabinet Member's response:

Thank you for your supplementary question. We would like to have 25,000 centres – one for each child in the borough but that is not possible. Currently the Council is responsible for 23 designated children's centres. No staff have been given redundancy notice as the consultation period is still effective and I will be able to tell you after this has finished. Family Support Workers will be increased. If you are so concerned why have you waited until now to ask this question to either me or the Mayor?

Point of personal explanation

Councillor Joshua Peck rose to give a personal explanation. He stated that he had in fact raised the matters set out in his question above previously with the Acting Corporate Director of Children, Schools and Families.

8.2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

"Has the administration undertaken any investigation or conversations with adjoining authorities and public sector bodies within the borough as to sharing staff or back office functions?"

Response of the Cabinet Member, Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

The authority is actively involved in work across London and East London on shared working. We are looking at the experiments taking place to test whether there is real business case for change beyond the headlines. We have also an example of successfully sharing services in the form of our Out

Of Hours call handling contract with Vangent, where a number of London Authorities joined together and are now receiving a service significantly cheaper due to economies of scale than when delivered in house.

We have to devote our main energies over the next few months on how to save money reliably and quickly, and although I wouldn't criticise other authorities for trying to negotiate a large-scale shared services arrangement, there is a danger that it is a huge distraction which is not within the control of any one authority and is not guaranteed to succeed. It would not give us

the assurance we need that it would protect front-line services.

The NHS and the Police are not governed at a local level and are always going to be subject to change imposed on them from above. Members will be aware that we have had arrangements in the past with the PCT to share senior management posts, but the proposed abolition of the PCT means that these arrangements would not have been sustainable. I support working in partnership, but as soon as the arrangement is formalised there is additional financial risk.

The best chance of successful shared services is probably to start small, on specific service areas where we can show benefits, and to work with organisations like ourselves. An example of this is our Benefits Resilience Contract. Here we have developed a framework agreement for benefit assessment which we use to undertake peaks in workloads and is now being offered to other London boroughs for them to use.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Peter Golds:

I will go back to the question that was put. I am aware that there are 33 staff members that are paid over £75,000 and 13 who are paid over £100,000 per year. Why have you not considered sharing some of these staff with other boroughs when you need to save money?

Summary of Cabinet Members' response:

Councillor Golds we will consider any options to protect our frontline services. I do not consider that writing to Eric Pickles suggesting that he takes away £3M of the Council's money will help.

Point of personal explanation

Councillor Peter Golds rose to give a personal explanation. He stated that he had not asked the Minister to take away £3M of funding from the Council. The Mayor intended to put this money into reserves and Councillor Golds sought to ensure that it was instead spent on maintaining services as intended by the Government.

8.3 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah

"Is the Mayor aware of the frustration and anger of residents in the Brick Lane area about the continuing problem of urination and defecation in public areas around Brick Lane as a result of the lack of public toilet facilities, especially at market times which on Sunday now

stretches throughout the day, and is he also aware of a large sign half way up Brick Lane saying please use the toilets but which has no indication where the toilets are, and does he agree that officers should urgently investigate this problem and that at least part of the solution will be to provide adequate and well-publicised temporary toilets, especially at market time?"

Response of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

We are fully aware of the concerns raised by residents about the problem of street urination within the Brick Lane Town Centre. We will not tolerate this as a council. So far, the Enforcement Officers have submitted 146 cases to legal services to pursue through the courts.

Over the Christmas period, the council coordinated a zero tolerance campaign to crack down on street urination. As part of Operation Mercer, there were 427 occasions when a person was challenged for their behaviour and asked to provide their name and address. There were 13 alcohol seizures, 16 prosecutions for public urination, 20 warnings and 2 arrests made.

The council is actively reviewing a number of options for the provision of public toilets. This includes a community toilet scheme which has been a success in London Borough of Richmond, for example. Under the scheme, local businesses would allow public to use their facilities during business hours. We will know more once the council has completed its review over the coming weeks and months. I want to reassure you that we are taking this issue very seriously.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Fozol Miah:

Would the Cabinet Member agree that something must be done to increase the toilet facilities even though in these financial times this may mean that higher charges need be made, and that better signage is needed?

Summary of Deputy Mayor's response:

Yes I agree.

8.4 Question from Councillor Anna Lynch

"Given that I have still not been provided with a figure and now that consultation on the future structure of Democratic Services has closed, can the Mayor now tell me what is the estimated additional full year cost to the Council's budget of setting up and staffing his office?"

Response of Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

I would ask Councillor Lynch to check her facts. The Democratic/Members' Services restructure proposals are still under consultation with staff and trade unions and therefore subject to change. Until the proposals are finalised an accurate figure cannot be given. I will not put out speculative figures but I will provide full and accurate information as soon as it is available.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Anna Lynch:

Thank you Councillor Choudhury. I have a figure for you. One of your staff is being paid more than £200 per day. With the care of the elderly being faced with cuts, do you think that is justified?

Summary of Cabinet Member's response:

I have no information of that nature. The borough voted overwhelmingly for the Mayoral system and the Mayor is working extremely hard. No resources are wasted in the Mayor's office.

8.5 Question from Councillor Tim Archer

"Will the Mayor please inform me what the future of the Isle of Dogs hoppa bus is?"

Response of the Mayor

Let me say first of all that I am a supporter of this service. The Hoppa bus was introduced in September 2009 and is due to run until 27th August 2011. The cost of the enabling work and operation in the first year was approximately £207,000. The service is funded through a s106 contribution from Crossharbour (London Arena) specifically aimed at bus improvements or new bus services and was agreed by the Planning Contributions Overview Panel on the 28th May 2009.

Officers have advised me that because of licensing, insurance and cash handling issues it was determined that collecting fares would not be a viable option to off-set some of the costs which would be entirely met from s106 contributions.

The Council is due to explore options with TfL to see if they could adopt a Councillor to lobby TfL and the Mayor. I hope that Cllr Archer can help me protect this service even when his Tory colleagues in Whitehall are cutting like mad.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Timothy Archer:

It is interesting to note you are a supporter of this bus or the Isle of Dogs ghost bus as it is known. It replaced a popular shopper bus provided by Tower Hamlets Community Transport which was well used and well liked. The hoppa bus is not well liked and costs £172,000 per year. This amounts to £36 per person, per journey. It would be cheaper to get taxis for people. Instead of charging for the use of the hoppa bus, will you scrap it and re-instate the previous service which was much loved and cost a fraction of the price?

Summary of the Mayor's response:

I note your comments and all possibilities will be explored.

8.6 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

“Is the Mayor aware that a contracting local authority may exclude an economic contractor from bidding if the contractor has “committed an act of grave misconduct in the course of its business” and does he agree that grave misconduct must include assisting the maintenance of illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory and would he urgently investigate the situation of Veolia in this regard and in particular the possibility both of terminating contractual arrangements with this company and excluding them from future bidding for council contracts?”

Response of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

I am aware that this issue has been raised in the past and it arouses strong emotions. At a personal level I share your feelings on this and strongly object to the illegal settlement of the West Bank. However, it is important that we put the interests of Tower Hamlets' residents before our own personal feelings. Our obligation is to provide the best service for the residents of Tower Hamlets. Faced with huge cuts from central government, we have to make sure, more than ever before, that we are providing the service that is also most cost effective.

Senior managers of Veolia have offered to discuss this issue with members. I would be more than happy to ask relevant council officials to set up a meeting with Veolia if sufficient members express an interest in this matter.

No supplementary question was asked.

8.7 Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah

“Can the Mayor tell me what action he is taking to build on the progress made by the last administration on increasing recycling rates in the Borough?”

Response of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Since the October 2010 Mayoral elections, the council has taken significant steps in this area.

A new high impact communications campaign was launched in January. As a former Lead Member, Cllr Ullah will be aware that past publicity campaigns have had a significant positive impact. Promotions include: outdoor advertising at bus stops, poster sites and public transport locations; lamppost banners; new vehicle livery; newspaper adverts and press releases; and on screen advertising at Idea Stores and Brick Lane.

The Council also recently made a bid to the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to deliver a campaign on food waste recycling.

This administration is committed to improving recycling.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Abdal Ullah:

Thank you Councillor Ahmed. I wasn't aware who had taken over cleaner, safer, greener but I note that it has been given to the Deputy Mayor. When I left the job recycling had increased 23%. Will the new Mayor take the challenge to improve on that?

Summary of Deputy Mayor's response:

Thank you Councillor Ullah. Under the current Mayor's leadership, as the former Leader of the Council, performance did increase and I congratulate you and the Mayor for your good work. You, I and other colleagues share the same goals. Come and work with us, the real Labour.

8.8 Question from Councillor David Snowdon

“The Mayor's diary includes a regular Tuesday slot with the Head of Communications to “look at the proposed news list for East End Life”. Would the Mayor please intimate as to whether he has directed the Head of Communications or any other officer to include or exclude a story for this publication, or specified which stories he wishes his picture attached to?”

Response of the Mayor

As Mayor I take a keen interest in how we promote our services and values. I know East End Life has its critics in this chamber, and I have already stated that it is up for review. However, it remains the main way the Council communicates with residents. As Mayor, it is my duty to be aware of what we're putting into the public domain.

As with previous administrations there are meetings with the Head of Communications to discuss the items they have placed in East End Life, but editorial control and compliance with the law continue to rest with that department. The guidelines as set out in the 2007 Cabinet report are strictly adhered to.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor David Snowdon:

Thank you Mr. Mayor. Does it not bother you that the person holding the consultation on the future of East End Life is the person responsible for this publication? Should we not have a proper independent enquiry?

Summary of the Mayor's response:

I have full confidence in the integrity of our officers. Let us wait for the options and then make a judgement.

8.9 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders

"Does the Mayor support the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in their vital conservation and heritage work and will he work with me to secure the future of the Park?"

Response of the Mayor

I fully support the conservation and heritage work done by the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and other park green spaces in the borough. For example, he has given his full support to protect the King Edward Memorial Park. I want to work with the community to conserve our green spaces and preserve the borough's heritage.

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park currently receives annual funding from the Communities, Localities and Culture Directorate budget. This pays for maintenance responsibilities within the cemetery park. This funding will continue and I will be happy to work with the Member to secure the future of the park.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Rachael Saunders:

I am glad to hear that commitment and welcome any work the Mayor can do on this. Dockers and Match Girls and those that died in the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster are buried at this cemetery. Will you arrange a meeting as soon as possible with me and the Friends of the Park to discuss funding?

Summary of the Mayor's response:

Being able to visit loved ones that we have lost is important. I will work with you and anyone else to ensure the good work continues.

8.10 Question from Councillor Zara Davis

"What steps has the Mayor taken to engage with Tower Hamlets residents over his budget proposals, and what opportunities have been provided for residents to feedback their views?"

Response of the Cabinet Member, Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

The authority regularly asks questions on finance and value for money as part of its regular consultation with residents. For this budget process, four focus groups were held with local residents from 9 – 13 January 2011. Participants were asked a series of questions, best grouped into three main subject areas. The first part of the session aimed to develop awareness about the forthcoming cuts amongst residents; the second part to develop a better understanding of the ways in which participants felt that the cuts will impact on local people; and the third part of the session was to explore the ways in which local people and organisations can work more effectively together in order to achieve results with less funding.

The outcome of this will be reported together with other consultations to Cabinet in February. The Mayor has also held two Budget Congress events with partners over the last few months to gain a shared understanding and approach to the issues we face as an area in response to Government cuts and the impact of Welfare reform, which of course go far beyond the Council's budget.

Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Zara Davis:

Two weeks ago in your own column in East End Life you said there would be lots of chances for residents to have their say in the coming weeks but I have not seen any consultation for all residents. Other boroughs are doing this. Why haven't you done a full and open consultation?

Summary of Cabinet Member's response:

We have had two sessions of Overview and Scrutiny with residents observing. We have held discussions with the Trade Unions, many of

whom are residents. A Budget congress with the third sector has been held and we have been out to the communities and spoken to people directly that are going to be affected.

In accordance with Rule 12.10 (expiry of the time limit) questions 8.11 to 8.24 were not put. Written responses would be forwarded to the questioners.

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

There was no business under this agenda item.

10. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)

There was no business under this agenda item.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Review of proportionality and allocation of places on committees and panels of the Council

RESOLVED

1. That the review of proportionality at paragraph 3 to the report of the Service Head, Democratic Services be noted and the allocation of seats on committees and panels established for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2010/11 be agreed as set out in paragraph 4.2 to the report.
2. That Members and deputies be appointed to serve on those committees and panels in accordance with nominations from the political groups to be notified to the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services).

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

12.1 Motion proposed by Councillor Fozol Miah regarding the Condem Government cuts

Councillor Fozol Miah **MOVED**, and Councillor Harun Miah **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor David Edgar **MOVED**, and Councillor Helal Abbas **SECONDED** an **amendment** as follows:-

“Under ‘This Council notes’ add:

7) The government has announced that it will provide a Council Tax Freeze Grant to Councils that set a Council Tax increase of 0%. This will be equivalent to the difference between a 0% Council Tax and raising 2011/12 Council Tax by 2.5%.

Under 'This Council believes':

Delete from Point 4 "i.e. through a rise in the top rate of taxation and"

Replace current point 5 with "The focus in reducing the deficit should be on protecting services that are essential to working people and the less well off."

Under 'This Council wants':

Delete Point 3"

Following debate, the amendment moved by Councillor Edgar was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

Councillor Peter Golds **MOVED**, and Councillor Tim Archer **SECONDED**, a further amendment to the substantive motion as follows:-

"Delete the title of the motion 'The Condem Government Cuts' and replace with:

Savings implemented by the Coalition Government

Delete all bullet points after 'This Council notes that' and replace with:

1. Labour doubled the national debt and left the current government with the biggest budget deficit in our peacetime history.
2. Labour brought the nation to the brink of bankruptcy, and it is costing the government £120 million every single day just to pay off the interest on Labour's debt. This is Labour's legacy.
3. In response to Labour's failed fiscal policies, the Coalition Government have had to reduce the government settlement in real terms awarded to nearly all local authorities in the UK.
4. Despite the huge pressures on public finances, the Coalition Government has taken unprecedented steps to protect councils most reliant on central government funding, such as the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and freeze council tax.
5. The Coalition Government understands the importance in protection of frontline services in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and is assisting the Council in its efficiency drive by providing a transitional grant. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is only one of three London Boroughs to receive this grant.

6. To further help Tower Hamlets residents, the Conservative Mayor of London has also frozen the Greater London Authority precept of Tower Hamlets residents' council tax.

Delete all bullet points after 'This Council believes that' and replace with:

1. These savings are necessary and justified and are a result of Labour's failed fiscal policies.
2. Labour have burdened our children and grandchildren with debt, and undermined our economy. They've opposed tough decisions by the Coalition Government on VAT, tuition fees and deficit reduction but offer no credible deficit reduction plan of their own.
3. The deficit does need to be reduced.
4. Running up Government debt is like someone running up massive credit card bills – the longer you leave it, the worse it gets. The Coalition Government have taken steps now to live within our means; if they had not have taken those steps we would end up paying higher taxes and face deeper cuts just to pay off our national debt.
5. As mentioned in a response to a question posed at Prime Ministers Question Time on Wednesday 26th January 2011, the Prime Minister stated that for their role in the banking crisis, he will ensure that taxes on banks go up and bankers' bonuses come down.

Delete bullet point 3) after 'This Council wants' and replace with:

3. Opportunities to be explored to boost locally raised revenue without the need for a Council Tax rise.

On bullet point 4) after 'This Council wants', amend;

'and to minimise the adverse effects of the government imposed cuts' with '."

Delete bullet point 4) and 5) after 'This Council wants'."

Following debate the amendment moved by Councillor Golds was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

The substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

This Council notes that:

- 1) The Con Dem Coalition government is imposing very severe cuts on local government, including £70 million cuts on Tower Hamlets

- 2) These cuts are affecting poorer areas like Tower Hamlets much more severely than better off areas represented by the Conservatives and Lib Dems
- 3) These cuts will have a disastrous effect on the essential services provided by this Council
- 4) These cuts will have a disastrous effect on employment in the borough as jobs in the Council disappear
- 5) The effects of these cuts are going to be compounded by rising unemployment particularly but not exclusively amongst our young people
- 6) The cuts in local government spending are also being made worse by other cuts such as the abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance and by the massive increase in university tuition fees
- 7) The Government has announced that it will provide a Council Tax Freeze Grant to councils that set a Council Tax increase of 0%. This will be equivalent to the difference between a 0% Council Tax and raising 2011/12 Council Tax by 2.5%.

This Council believes that:

- 1) These cuts are unnecessary and unjustified
- 2) The government deficit which is being used to justify these cuts is the product of the chaos and decline in the real economy brought about by the reckless activity of the financial sector
- 3) The deficit does need to be reduced over time but in the first instance this must be through economic growth which is being jeopardised by the Government's spending cuts
- 4) The deficit can be further reduced by taxing those most able as opposed to least able to pay through exceptional taxes on bank profits and bankers' bonuses.
- 5) The focus in reducing the deficit should be on protecting services that are essential to working people and the less well off.

This Council recognises the difficulties imposed on the Council, given the central Government cuts, by the legal requirement to produce a so-called "balanced budget".

This Council wants

- 1) The budget being prepared for vote on 23rd February to reflect the perspective outlined above
- 2) Every effort to be made both to eliminate waste and drive up efficiency in the delivery of council services

- 3) Maximum consultation with the trade union representatives of the council staff and with the recipients of the council's services to try to identify efficiency savings and to minimise the adverse effects of the government imposed cuts.
- 4) A campaign, such as the one being pursued by Lambeth Council, informing Tower Hamlets residents of the unprecedented cuts being imposed by the Con Dem Coalition government and inviting them into a dialogue on the best way forward.
- 5) A campaign to inform every Tower Hamlets resident of the great march and demonstration against the cuts called by the Trades Union Congress for Saturday 26th March

12.3 Motion proposed by Councillor Tim Archer regarding recording Council meetings

Councillor Timothy Archer **MOVED** and Councillor Peter Golds **SECONDED** the motion as printed in the agenda.

The motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

This Council notes that:

- It is able to audibly and visually record council meetings using current technical equipment available in the council chamber.
- It is able to record business conducted at Full Council with little or no cost to the taxpayer.

This council believes that:

- democracy and accountability are important concepts in order to gain public trust in the decision making in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- residents should be able to refer to and view council meetings through the use of audio visual equipment.
- conduct of Members of the Council will be positively affected by the knowledge that footage is in the public domain.

This Council resolves: -

- To audio and video record each meeting of the Full Council to enable reference for members of the public, Council Members and officers and to increase transparency and accountability.

- To amend the Tower Hamlets Council Constitution, Part 4, Rule 27.1 to read 'No photography or video or audio recording of any kind by guests and members of the public may take place at any Council Meeting without the express permission of the Chair.'
- To introduce to the Tower Hamlets Council Constitution, Part 4, Rule 27.2 to read 'The Council Chamber, whilst the public gallery is open and the Council is conducting its business at the Meeting of the Tower Hamlets Council, will be video and audio recorded by the Council and made available online within 48 hours.'

12.4 Motion proposed by Councillor Harun Miah regarding "Bin Veolia"

Councillor Harun Miah **MOVED**, and Councillor Fozol Miah **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Stephanie Eaton then **MOVED**, and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, an amendment – "That under point 4, replace the word "terminate" with the word "review"."

Councillor Harun Miah accepted this amendment to his motion.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

This Council notes that:

- 1) This Council has long-term contracts with the multinational company Veolia
- 2) Veolia is deeply involved in contract work for the Israeli government which assist their continued oppression of the Palestinian people
- 3) In particular Veolia is directly implicated in maintaining illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territory
- 4) Under the Public Contract Regulations (2006) a contracting local authority may exclude an economic contractor from bidding for a contract if the contractor has "committed an act of grave misconduct in the course of its business"

This Council believes that:

- 1) Veolia has clearly committed acts of grave misconduct in relation to the Palestinian people and the maintenance of illegal settlements and in other respects as well
- 2) There should be an urgent investigation by Council officers to confirm the charges of grave misconduct that have been levelled in the international campaign to "Bin Veolia"

- 3) This Council should do everything in its power to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against the pariah state of Israel.
- 4) Urgent steps should be taken to review all contracts with Veolia and not to place any further contracts with this company
- 5) The Mayor should write to Veolia as soon as possible to communicate to them the contents of this motion and the council's determination to terminate any relationship to Veolia.

Debate then commenced on Motion 12.5 but this motion was not put, and Motion 12.6 was not considered, due to the time limit for the meeting being reached.

The meeting ended at 10.30 p.m.

Chair,
Council

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LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2011

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

Members Present:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed	Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shelina Aktar	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Councillor Craig Aston	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Lutfu Begum	Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer
Councillor Mizan Chaudhury	Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zara Davis	Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Judith Gardiner	Councillor Gloria Thienel
Councillor Carlo Gibbs	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Ann Jackson	Councillor Amy Whitelock

The meeting commenced at 7.35 p.m.

The Chair of Council, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman, in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made declarations of interest in items included on the agenda as follows:

Councillor	Item	Type of interest	Reason
Rofique Ahmed	5.1	Personal	I am trustee of East End Citizen Advice Bureau
Peter Golds	5.1	Personal	I am the Council's representative on the Green Candle Dance company who are recipients of a grant
Denise Jones	5.1	Personal	I am a non-executive member of the PCT Board and a School Governor at Mulberry School
Joshua Peck	5.1	Personal	I am a representative on the Greenwich and Docklands Festival Board

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

No announcements were made at this meeting.

4. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS**4.1 Petition from Mr. Terry McGrenera and others re: the Council's budget strategy**

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Mr. Terry McGrenera addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners.

Mayor Lutfur Rahman then responded to the petition. He said that he had never claimed to be anything like George Lansbury and Tower Hamlets was a high performing borough and the Council was in this position not from its own making but that of Central Government which had compelled it to make £72 M worth of savings. Services that were delivered to the people would be protected and these principals had been the basis that had been used when putting the budget papers together. Efficiencies had been found that would protect the Council's services and workforce and he hoped that all sides could agree the budget this evening.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Resources for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

4.2 Petition from Mrs. Dinah Glover and others regarding East End Life

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Mrs. Dinah Glover and Mr. Daryl Stafford addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and replied to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Regeneration then responded to the petition. She said that the Government's proposals mentioned by the petitioners took the form of guidance not legislation. The actual cost of producing the paper was £370K. If East End Life was abolished then the Council would have to pay to advertise statutory notices and housing choice in other publications and it also raised concerns about information reaching the vulnerable and disabled residents of the borough.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

4.3 Petition from Ms. Lil Collins and others regarding the budget proposals

At the invitation of the Chair of Council, Ms. Lil Collins and Mr. Brian Nicholson addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and replied to questions from Members of the Council.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, then responded to the petition. Most of what the petitioners had said had been taken on board. The Mayor had only had four months to put the budget proposals together. The residents needed to be put first along with frontline services and protecting jobs. Councillor Choudhury said that he regretted that Councillor Golds had written to Mr. Eric Pickles asking for a transitional grant of over £3M to be withheld.

Councillor Peter Golds rose to make a point of personal explanation as he had been referred to.

At this point, a Councillor informed the Chair of Council that she had heard a homophobic comment from the public gallery. The Chair warned all present that the Council would not accept or tolerate any such comments and asked the person responsible to leave the meeting.

Point of personal explanation

Councillor Peter Golds informed the meeting that he had not asked Mr Eric Pickles to withdraw the transitional grant. Rather Councillor Golds wanted the money to be spent on maintaining services as intended but the Mayor was proposing instead to put £3M into reserves.

RESOLVED

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Resources for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

5. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2011/12**5.1 Report of the Cabinet Meeting of 9th February 2011**

Mayor Lutfur Rahman introduced his budget proposals. He stated that the £30M of cuts necessary in the forthcoming financial year had been found without closing libraries or children's centres, or increasing school dinner prices. Homes would be built to rent and Tower Hamlets Homes had that day gained a two star rating and the borough had secured £100M in decent homes funding. In relation to crime and policing the Mayor had met with the Borough Commander to put together a proposal that will combine some of our dedicated policing resources with extra funding from the GLA that will enable the borough to employ 21 more Police officers.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED** the budget proposals of the Mayor and Executive. He placed on record his thanks to Councillors and Officers for their months of intensive work on the budget. 28% of the Council's grant had been cut by Central Government and the Council had been forced to find £71M of cuts over three years with 42% in 2011/12. Councillor Choudhury considered that the proposals represented a progressive budget to enable the Council to continue to be one of the best performing Councils in London.

Councillor Rabina Khan **SECONDED** the motion and addressed the Council in support of it.

Councillor Helal Abbas then **MOVED** and Councillor David Edgar **SECONDED** a tabled **amendment** as attached at Appendix A.

Councillor David Snowdon the **MOVED** and Councillor Zara Davis **SECONDED** a further tabled **amendment** as attached at Appendix B.

Councillor Stephanie Eaton then **MOVED** and Councillor Fozol Miah **SECONDED** a further tabled **amendment** as attached at Appendix C.

Adjournment

Following debate, the Chair of Council announced that the meeting would adjourn to allow the Mayor to consider the amendments that had been proposed. (9.10pm)

At 9.30pm the meeting resumed its business and the Mayor's response to the amendments was tabled.

The Mayor indicated that he was willing to accept in its entirety the amendment moved by Councillor Stephanie Eaton and Councillor Fozol Miah and in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.8.1 altered his motion accordingly.

In relation to the amendment moved by Councillor David Edgar and Councillor Helal Abbas, the Mayor stated that he would be happy to support all of the elements except those relating to:-

1. The Junior Youth Service, as this proposal had been dealt with under the amendment proposed by Councillor Stephanie Eaton and Councillor Fozol Miah and their solution achieved the same result and was cheaper;
2. East End Life – The Mayor was happy to commit to a saving of at least £200,000 but any decision on the frequency and format of any future Council publication should be based on the decision of the ongoing review as officers had pointed out the risks of making this decision without detailed costings of all possible solutions; and
3. Policing – Councillor Edgar's proposal was unacceptable as it cut across ongoing negotiations between the Council and the Police around recently announced GLA funding for police officers. These negotiations would enable the Council to deliver 21 extra Police officers without any need to cut THEOs.

In relation to the amendment moved by Councillor David Snowdon and Councillor Zara Davis, the Mayor stated that he would not be accepting any part of the amendment as he did not feel that it reflected the needs of the borough.

Following points of clarification on a number of matters to which, at the invitation of the Chair, Corporate Directors provided Members with information, the Chair of Council announced that the meeting would again adjourn, to allow Members to consider the Mayor's response to the amendments and his revised motion. (9.45pm)

The meeting resumed business at 10.02pm.

At this point the Chair of Council stated that someone in the public gallery had threatened a member of staff and he asked that person to leave the meeting.

Following a continuing disturbance in the public gallery the Chair again adjourned the meeting and in accordance with Procedure Rule 24.2, ordered the public gallery to be cleared. (10.12pm).

The meeting resumed business at 10.18pm.

Councillor David Edgar advised the meeting that the Labour Group were not satisfied with the Mayor's response and accordingly would not be varying their tabled amendment. Councillor Edgar sought further information on aspects of the Mayor's proposals and the officer advice.

Following debate, the amendment moved by Councillor David Edgar and Councillor Helal Abbas was put to the vote.

At this point more than 10 Members rose to request a recorded vote.

Before the recorded vote commenced, Members sought clarification about the procedure for moving a further amendment or varying a tabled amendment. The Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) advised that Members had an opportunity during the debate to change their amendment. The Section 151 Officer had confirmed that the amendments being voted upon were not inconsistent and it was now too late to do so as the meeting was moving to the vote.

The recorded vote was then taken on the amendment moved by Councillor Edgar and Members indicated their votes as follows:-

For the amendment (29 Councillors):

Councillor Helal Abbas
Councillor Kabir Ahmed
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Shahed Ali
Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Judith Gardiner
Councillor Carlo Gibbs
Councillor Shafiqul Haque
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman
Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Ann Jackson
Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Ahmed Omer
Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zenith Rahman

Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

Against the amendment (0 Councillors)

Abstained (19 Councillors):

Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Ohid Ahmed
Councillor Shelina Aktar
Councillor Timothy Archer
Councillor Craig Aston
Councillor Lutfu Begum
Councillor Alibor Choudhury
Councillor Zara Davis
Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Maium Miah
Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Gloria Thienel

The amendment was therefore **carried**.

The amendment moved by Councillor David Snowdon and Councillor Zara Davis was then put to the vote and was **defeated**.

Finally, the substantive motion as amended was put to the vote.

At this point more than 10 Members rose to request a recorded vote. A recorded vote was therefore taken on the substantive motion and Members indicated their votes as follows:-

For the amendment (32 Councillors):

Councillor Helal Abbas
Councillor Kabir Ahmed
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Shahed Ali
Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury

Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Judith Gardiner
Councillor Carlo Gibbs
Councillor Shafiqul Haque
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman
Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Ann Jackson
Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Ahmed Omer
Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

Against the amendment (0 Councillors)

Abstained (16 Councillors):

Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Ohid Ahmed
Councillor Shelina Aktar
Councillor Timothy Archer
Councillor Craig Aston
Councillor Lutfu Begum
Councillor Alibor Choudhury
Councillor Zara Davis
Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Maium Miah
Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Gloria Thienel

The substantive motion as amended was therefore **carried** as follows:-

A. This Council notes that:

1. The scale of the cuts imposed on public services, families and individuals by the Conservative-led government and their Liberal Democrat partners
2. Tower Hamlets Council is facing cuts of £72million over the next three years.
3. The decision of the Cabinet under the previous Labour administration that the priority in responding to the government's cuts be protecting the delivery of frontline services by reducing layers of management, cutting agency staff, tougher deals with suppliers, using fewer buildings, and other measures.
4. Nonetheless the government has granted Tower Hamlets a special transition grant of £4.143 million.
5. The government has also introduced a pupil premium which will be worth approximately £9 million to support the education of the most deprived children in the Borough.
6. The government has also increased the ability of the Council to manage its finances efficiently and effectively with the removal of ring-fenced budgets.
7. Tower Hamlets Homes has been granted £95.4 million to improve the Borough's council housing stock.
8. The Mayor has stated his intention to review East End Life by May 2011.
9. Under the previous Labour administration the Council wasted funds on publicity photographs by millionaire fashion photographer Rankin; held a Senior Management Team awayday in a hotel in Greenwich; paid for expensive celebrity guest speakers at staff awards ceremonies; and presided over an inflated communications department.

B. This Council believes:

1. The government is cutting too fast and too deeply with damaging consequences for the people of Tower Hamlets

C. This Council notes that the proposals put forward by the Mayor and Cabinet will ensure that:

1. Every children's centre will remain open.
2. Out-of-school hours activities will remain available for every child.
3. Homecare services for eligible residents will continue to be free; and Tower Hamlets will be the only local authority in the country to provide these services free.
4. Resident parking permits, visitor Scratch cards and short stay parking charges will be frozen at 2010/11 levels.
5. There will be no reductions to concessions at leisure centres and no increases above the rate of inflation in 'on the door' pay and play charges for sports and leisure facilities.

6. There will be no increases above the rate of inflation for hire of premises run by the arts and events team, e.g. for the Brady Centre.
7. Fees and charges will remain the same for street and market traders for 2011/12 for the third successive year.
8. Council tax will not increase in 2011/2012

D. This Council:

1. Supports the goals of the Mayor and Cabinet to protect front line services, and minimise job losses.
2. Supports the Mayor and Cabinet's approach to General Fund reserves, recognising that it is prudent to place additional resources in the General Fund reserves due to strategic financial risks.
3. Confirms that young people, employment and housing are among this Council's highest priorities.

E. This Council agrees the budget proposals put forward by the Independent Mayor subject to the following amendments:-

1. To use previously unallocated capital funding of £2.9 million pounds in order to increase social housing, and release the following 'earmarked' reserves for the immediate benefit of the Borough:

Single status reserve £1 million

Chief Executive's reserve £0.7 million

This comprises a total of £4.6 million to be put to immediate use in major funding initiatives to reflect the Council's priorities of young people, employment and housing.

F. This Council resolves:

1. To apply £1.04million to support apprenticeships, leadership training and new graduate employment initiatives over 3 years. That the Corporate Directors of Development and Renewal and Children's Services bring forward proposals to be included the Mayor's forthcoming employment strategy.

A total of £1.04 million to develop apprenticeships, leadership training and new graduate employment initiatives in the borough.

2. To allocate £3.5 million of capital to increase affordable housing in the Borough. Measures to include but not limited to:
 - knock-through of apartments to provide larger family sized accommodation – number to be determined by demand, suitability of site, and cost.
 - Leaseholder buy-backs
 - Development of new housing schemes (see below at 4.)

A total of £3.5 million to increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough.

3. To make available the site at 585 - 593 Commercial Road E1 0HJ for development with the aim of maximizing the provision of high quality social rented housing

- The practice of removing and storing illegally parked vehicles at the car pound on 585 - 593 Commercial Road is to be discontinued. Therefore, the site will no longer be required for that use, and the land is available for development. The value of the land is approximately £5 million. Subject to planning permission and with the support of a development partner, making the site available for redevelopment provides an opportunity for substantial numbers of new homes in the Borough.

Approx £5.0 million land value to develop high quality social housing to provide a maximum number of social rented homes on the site of the former car pound at 585 - 593 Commercial Road.

4. To delete the following savings:

		2011/12 £'000
AHWB/1	Housing Link	252
CE/2	Democratic Services	243
CSF/5	Extended schools services	753
		1,248

5. To replace with the following savings:

AHWB/1 – Housing link provides an important service for people with a mental health problems who are going through a housing crisis and who may be at risk of homelessness or tenancy breakdown. Maintain this service with a 25% reduction in funding and a requirement to work with the Council including the Supporting People team to review caseloads, costs and the interaction with other services. £78k

CE/2 – Support to the Mayor and Councillors – in order to allow Councillors to represent effectively residents and others who raise issues with them, the following support be maintained – responses to enquiries to be sent to the resident concerned; enquiries to housing associations, the police and others to continue; “Streetline” enquiries to continue to be dealt with whenever the response to the telephone helpline is

not satisfactory; surgeries to be supported at the same level. Councillors to continue to receive paper copies of agendas for committees where they request them in order to scrutinize effectively on behalf of residents the decisions and work of the Council and the Mayor. £82k

CE/2 – In recognition of the cuts being made across the Council's budget, freeze the Councillor's Basic Allowances and Mayor's salary at the current level for 2011/12; cut Special Responsibility Allowances by 5%; provide suitable transport for civic and ceremonial functions within London only for the sole use of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council.

CE/2 – In recognition of the substantial contributions that local residents make to the life of the borough and the desirability of publicly recognizing this, maintain a Civic Awards scheme but combine it with the Mayor's Community Safety Awards and limit any refreshments at the ceremony to those funded by sponsorship.

The above give a non-staff saving of £82,000.

CE/2 – Support to the Mayor and Councillors – recognizing the full access to the resources of the Council that the Mayor has and the need to balance appropriately the level of support to the Mayor and Executive with that available to other 46 councillors, cap the cost of staff support to the Mayor and Executive to £271,000. Any new appointments to be subject to the Council's redeployment procedures. The above give a staff saving, including that to the committee section, of £230,000. £230k

CSF/5 – The Junior Youth Service provides valued after school childcare for the children of many working and non-working parents. This service to be continued in at least eight schools for working and non-working parents at the current level of charges. The Council to agree with schools whether this service is provided directly by the Council or school-run provision is subsidized by the Council, the aim being to maximize the number of places provided. The funding for this provision to be £406,000. £347k

LEAN/2 – Make a further saving of £60,000 from the senior staff budget in Communications and reallocate the funding to the adventure play facilities (CLC/4) at Bartlett Park and Whitehorse Road to increase by

£60,000 the amount available to commission provision from the third sector.

East End Life – in line with the Government’s Local Authority Publicity Code to reduce publication to quarterly with a saving of £200,000. £200k

Community Safety – add 17 police officers – one per ward – to the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, meeting with local residents at Ward Panels, to replace the current team of Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers with effect from 1 July at a net saving in 2011/12 of £25,000 and a net saving in 2012/13 of £180,000. £25k

Reduce the contribution to reserves by £286,000

G. This Council notes:

that as a result of these proposals the Tower Hamlets Council Tax at Band D for 2011/12 will remain at £885.52 and the Local Priorities Capital Programme for 2010/11 - 2013/14 will increase to £50.990m.

H. That the Council Resolves: -

General Fund Revenue Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2011/2012

1. To agree a total Budget Requirement for Tower Hamlets in 2011/12 of £310,960,000;
2. To agree a Council Tax for Tower Hamlets in 2011/12 of £885.52 at Band D;

- a) Resulting in a Council Tax for all other band taxpayers, before any discounts, and excluding the GLA precept, as set out in the Table below:-

BAND	PROPERTY VALUE		RATIO TO BAND D	LBTH COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH BAND £
	FROM	TO		
A	0	40,000	$\frac{6}{9}$	£590.35
B	40,001	52,000	$\frac{7}{9}$	£688.74
C	52,001	68,000	$\frac{8}{9}$	£787.13
D	68,001	88,000	$\frac{9}{9}$	£885.52
E	88,001	120,000	$\frac{11}{9}$	£1,082.30
F	120,001	160,000	$\frac{13}{9}$	£1,279.08
G	160,001	320,000	$\frac{15}{9}$	£1,475.87
H	320,001	and over	$\frac{18}{9}$	£1,771.04

3. To agree that for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in 2011/12:-

- (a) The Council Tax for Band D taxpayers, before any discounts, and including the GLA precept, shall be £1,195.34 as shown below: -.

£	
(Band D, No Discounts)	
LBTH	885.52
GLA	309.82
Total	1,195.34

- (b) The Council Tax for taxpayers in all other bands, before any discounts, and including the GLA precept, shall be as detailed in the table below: -

BAND	PROPERTY VALUE		RATIO TO BAND D	LBTH	GLA	TOTAL
	FROM	TO				
A	0	40,000	$\frac{6}{9}$	£590.35	£206.55	£796.90
B	40,001	52,000	$\frac{7}{9}$	£688.74	£240.97	£929.71
C	52,001	68,000	$\frac{8}{9}$	£787.13	£275.40	£1,062.53
D	68,001	88,000	$\frac{9}{9}$	£885.52	£309.82	£1,195.34
E	88,001	120,000	$\frac{11}{9}$	£1,082.30	£378.67	£1,460.97
F	120,001	160,000	$\frac{13}{9}$	£1,279.08	£447.52	£1,726.60
G	160,001	320,000	$\frac{15}{9}$	£1,475.87	£516.37	£1,992.24
H	320,001	and over	$\frac{18}{9}$	£1,771.04	£619.64	£2,390.68

- 4 To approve the statutory calculations of this Authority's total Budget requirement in 2011/12, detailed in **Appendix A** to this motion, undertaken by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with the requirements of Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 5 To approve the Capital Programme, Treasury Management Strategy, and Investment Strategy as set out in the Document Pack, subject to the amendments agreed above.

I. That the Council further resolves:

1. To carry out reviews of the impact of the following savings proposals on service users (involving their families, advocates and friends where appropriate) and report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council by the end of October 2011 in time for the results of the reviews to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13:
 - Promoting independence and reducing demand for domiciliary care through reablement
 - Better use of supported housing
 - Modernising learning disability day services
 - Redesign and integration of early years and children's centres management.

2. To ensure that the equalities impact assessments for the impact of the budget savings are kept under review and updated and that the proposed Fairness Commission includes cross party representatives and reports in time for its conclusions to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13.

Outcome of the meeting

The Service Head, Democratic Services then advised Members that as the Council had agreed budget proposals that were different from the Mayor's proposals, the statutory dispute resolution process would come into operation. The Council was required to inform the Mayor of their objection to his budget proposals and set a period of at least 5 working days, starting on the day after the meeting, within which the Mayor and Executive could reconsider their proposals in the light of that objection and resubmit them for consideration at a further meeting of the Council.

The Chair of Council informed Members that this further meeting would be held on Tuesday 8th March 2011.

RESOLVED

That the Mayor and Executive be informed of the Council's objection to their budget proposals as set out in the substantive motion (as amended) above and be requested to reconsider their budget proposals in the light of that objection and within a period of 5 working days, commencing on Thursday 24th February, submit any revised proposals for consideration at a further Council meeting in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

The meeting ended at 11.32 p.m.

Chair,
Council

APPENDIX A

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA ITEM 5.1: BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2011/12

Proposed: Councillor Helal Abbas
Seconded: Councillor David Edgar

This Council notes:

1. The scale of the cuts imposed on public services, families and individuals by the Conservative-led government and their Liberal Democrat partners.
2. That Tower Hamlets Council is facing cuts of £72million over the next three years.
3. The decision of the Cabinet under the previous Labour administration that the priority in responding to the government's cuts be protecting the delivery of frontline services by reducing layers of management, cutting agency staff, tougher deals with suppliers, using fewer buildings, and other measures.

This Council believes:

1. The government is cutting too fast and too deeply with damaging consequences for the people of Tower Hamlets.

This Council resolves:

To amend the Independent Mayor's budget as follows:

Delete the following savings:		
		2011/12
		£'000
AHWB/1	Housing Link	252
CE/2	Democratic Services	243
CSF/5	Extended schools services	753
		1,248
Replace with the following savings:		
		2011/12
		£'000
AHWB/1	Housing Link provides an important service for people with a mental health problems who are going through a housing crisis and who may be at risk of homelessness or tenancy breakdown. Maintain this service with a 25% reduction in funding and a requirement to work with the Council including the Supporting People team to review caseloads, costs and the interaction with other services.	78
CE/2	Support to the Mayor and Councillors - in order to allow Councillors to represent effectively residents and others who raise issues with them, the following support be maintained - responses to enquiries to be sent to the resident concerned; enquiries to housing associations, the police and others to continue; "Streetline" enquiries to continue to be dealt with whenever the response to the telephone helpline is not satisfactory; surgeries to be supported at the same level. Councillors to continue to receive paper copies of agendas for committees where they request them in order to scrutinise effectively on behalf of residents the decisions and work of the Council and Mayor.	82

		2011/12 £'000
CE/2	In recognition of the cuts being made across the Council's budget, freeze the Councillor's Basic Allowances and Mayor's salary at the current level for 2011/12; cut Special Responsibility Allowances by 5%; provide suitable transport for civic and ceremonial functions within London only for the sole use of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council.	
CE/2	In recognition of the substantial contributions that local residents make to the life of the borough and the desirability of publicly recognising this, maintain a Civic Awards scheme but combine it with the Mayor's Community Safety Awards and limit any refreshments at the ceremony to those funded by sponsorship.	
	The above give a non-staff saving of £82,000.	
CE/2	Support to the Mayor and Councillors - recognising the full access to the resources of the Council that the Mayor has and the need to balance appropriately the level of support to the Mayor and Executive with that available to other 46 councillors, cap the cost of staff support to the Mayor and Executive to £271,000. Any new appointments to be subject to the Council's redeployment procedures. The above give a staff saving, including that to the committee section, of £230,000.	230
CSF/5	The Junior Youth Service provides valued after school childcare for the children of many working and non-working parents. This service to be continued in at least eight schools for working and non-working parents at the current level of charges. The Council to agree with schools whether this service is provided directly by the Council or school-run provision is subsidised by the Council, the aim being to maximise the number of places provided. The funding for this provision to be £406,000.	347
LEAN/2	Make a further saving of £60,000 from the senior staff budget in Communications and reallocate the funding to the adventure play facilities (CLC/4) at Bartlett Park and Whitehorse Road to increase by £60,000 the amount available to commission provision from the third sector.	
	East End Life - in line with the Government's Local Authority Publicity Code to reduce publication to quarterly with a saving of £200,000.	200
	Community Safety - add 17 police officers - one per ward - to the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, meeting with local residents at Ward Panels, to replace the current team of Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers with effect from 1 July at a net saving in 2011/12 of £25,000 and a net saving in 2012/13 of £180,000.	25

Reduce the contribution to reserves by £286,000.

Note that as a result of these proposals the Tower Hamlets Council Tax at Band D for 2011/12 will remain at £885.52

This Council further resolves:

1. To carry out reviews of the impact of the following savings proposals on service users (involving their families, advocates and friends where appropriate) and report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council by the end of

October 2011 in time for the results of the reviews to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13:

- Promoting independence and reducing demand for domiciliary care through reablement
 - Better use of supported housing
 - Modernising learning disability day services
 - Redesign and integration of early years and children's centres management.
2. To ensure that the equalities impact assessments for the impact of the budget savings are kept under review and updated and that the proposed Fairness Commission includes cross party representatives and reports in time for its conclusions to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13.

APPENDIX B

Amendment proposed by: Councillor David Snowdon

Amendment seconded by: Councillor Zara Davis

This Council notes:

1. The financial black hole inherited from Labour both at a national level and at the Council level;
2. That Tower Hamlets Council has accumulated £354million of debt and is paying £22 million each year on debt interest alone;
3. That this debt pile is the legacy of years of fiscal irresponsibility from the previous Labour administrations;
4. That the Town Hall continues to waste money through propaganda, consultants, advertising and Council subscriptions;
5. That residents have not been consulted over the budget proposals;
6. That the 34 residents who attended focus groups on the budget were concerned by the cost of East End Life and wanted to see greater joint service provision across neighbouring boroughs.

This Council will:

7. Implement the following recurring spending reductions:

Budget Line	Description	2011/12 Budget Saving			
East End Life	Discontinue East End Life. Carry out statutory advertising through other newspapers.	£250,000			
Senior Staff Salaries	Reduce the salaries budget of the Council, with a clear emphasis on the highest paid staff. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff earning over £170k to receive a 10% reduction in salary • Staff earning over £100k to receive a 5% reduction in salary 	Total saving £112,800 comprising:			
		Salary without costs (£)	No of posts	Total cost (£)	Saving (£)
		>170k	1	224k	22.4k
		>100k	13	1,808k	90.4k
Staff Salaries Settlement	Remove the provision for a National Pay increase of £250 per worker now that the local government employers have offered a 0% increase	£750,000			
Special Responsibility Allowances	Abolish Special Responsibility Payments for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Licensing • Chair of Appeals • Chair of General Purposes • Chair of Audit • Chair of Human Resources • Chair of Pensions Committee • Olympics Ambassador 	Total saving £47,157, comprising:			
		£7,955			
		£7,955			
		£7,955			
		£5,823			
		£5,823			
		£5,823			
		£5,823			

Language Extension Classes, also known as 'Mother Tongue Classes'	Set up a private trading company to provide extra-curricular language classes to make service cost neutral and protect it into the long-term. Expand coverage of world languages covered by these classes e.g. Russian, Portuguese, Italian. See Annex I	£750,000
Single Person Discount on Council Tax	The Council is already using data checking to reduce the number of people fraudulently claiming the single person discount on Council Tax. We will substitute a reduction to 33% of households claiming Single Person Discount with a reduction to 32.75%	£74,629
Events	Savings comprising of: Reducing the budgetary impact of the annual fireworks display. Inviting Hackney to contribute to the event, to make it a joint production. Or failing Hackney taking up their share of the responsibility, ensure more "bang for our buck". Halve the Tower Hamlets Council contribution to the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival Halve the Tower Hamlets contribution to the Spitalfields Music Festival	Total saving £98,070 comprising: £73,070 £12,500 £12,500
Consultants	Reduce spending by 20%	£260,000
Conferences	Reduce spending by 20%	£44,000
Advertising	Reduce spending by 10% including no further lamp-post column advertising or bus shelter posters	£165,000
Communications	Cut 'in the news'	£7,500
Film Officer	Film Officer to make a contribution to main budget of £48,000 (represents levering in an additional 25% of funding through	£48,000

	film location contracts)	
Council Subscriptions to Organisations	<p>Leave various organisations to which the Council has subscribed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Local Government Information Unit • the New Local Government Network 	<p>Total saving £27,100 comprising of:</p> <p>£15,100</p> <p>£12,000</p>
Subscriptions to newspapers	Reduce spending on subscriptions to newspapers, magazines and periodicals by 5%	£4,897
Pot plants	Reduction in facilities management budget, with saving to be primarily achieved through ending all spending on buying and maintaining pot plants.	£18,696
Total Additional Revenue Savings		£2,657,849

8. Implement the following recurring expenditure increases:

Title	Description	Spending
Police	Provide an additional 17 police officers, one extra per ward.	£680,000
ESOL	Provide an additional gross 500 places to clear the waiting lists for ESOL courses.	£300,000 This cost is based on the Skills Funding Agency cost per ESOL student.
Road Maintenance	Double the Council's spend on road repairs in 2011/12 to take account of the high wear and tear caused by the hard winter	£283,000
Wapping Road Maintenance	Repairs to Wapping Wall and Wapping High Street including repairing the sinking road, potholes and cobbles.	£95,000
Litter/Dog / Park Wardens	Provide additional Dog Wardens (x2), Litter Wardens (x2) and Park Wardens (x2)	£232,000
Total Additional Revenue Expenditure		£1,590,000

9. Implement the following non-recurring spending / capital spending for 2011/12:

Mudchute Children's Centre, Isle of Dogs	Provide capital funding to expand the buildings. This will enable the nursery provision to be doubled from 18 to 36 baby places, the playgroup provision to be doubled from 16 to 32 places, it will provide an additional 20 places for children at the breakfast club, an additional 20 places in the after school club, and allow the centre to take in up to 20 children each day during school holidays under an emergency holiday scheme. They have enough children on their waiting to immediately fill all new places that become available.	£590,750
Docklands Heritage Boards, Isle of Dogs	Fund to CLC to repair existing boards from the LDDC at £600 each. Leverage in additional funding from business and educational groups for a schools' local history programme, and a local heritage trail, potentially working with the Museum of London Docklands	£20,000
Contingency	Contingency fund, in case of overspend/efficiencies coming in lower than forecast	£457,099
Total Additional Capital Expenditure		£1,067,849

10. Take the following action with regards to reserves:

Reserves	Move £1 million of the £3 million 2011/12 allocation to reserves into a ring-fenced 'Fund to Repay Debt With Excessive Interest Payments' (See Annex II)	£1,000,000
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11. Give the requisite one year's notice to withdraw from the Local Government Association. This will save the Council the subscription fee of £44,860 in 2012/13 and future years.
12. Sell the Renault site at 535-593 Commercial Road as it is no longer required as a car pound. The sale of this site on the open market will produce a significant profit for the Council as a result of the marriage value of the

recently acquired leasehold and the freehold. A desktop valuation by Council officers places the value of the Renault site at £5 million. The receipts from this would be used to pay off the LBTH debt pile – through the Special Fund outlined in Annex II - and therefore reduce debt interest payments in future years.

13. Request that the Boundary Commission reduces the number of Councillors from 3 Councillors per ward to 2 per ward. This would produce direct savings of £171,105 per annum (workings are 17 x Basic Allowance = £171,105).
14. Outsource all communications work within the Council to WestCo, which currently carries out the communications functions for other London Boroughs.
15. Investigate shared procurement, for example on electricity. The Council notes that Kent County Council already co-ordinates electricity for many Councils including for other London Boroughs.
16. Investigate joining the Redbridge Culture and Leisure Trust, which would be responsible for the day-to-day management of all sports and leisure services, events, libraries and parks & open spaces in the borough. Tower Hamlets Council would retain its strategic decision-making role for these services, but would be able to achieve substantial financial savings as a result of sharing these back-office functions with Redbridge and other Councils.
17. Investigate sharing services with other Councils on:
 - a. Legal services
 - b. Call centre
 - c. Organisational development and training
 - d. Audit
 - e. Payroll
 - f. Recruitment Services
18. Investigate sharing the borough's planning, development and licensing functions with neighbouring boroughs.

Annex I

Language Extension Classes, also known as Mother Tongue Classes

Mother tongue classes are a major item in the Council's budget, costing three quarters of a million pounds a year. Amid the need to find savings across the Council, mother tongue classes must be one of the areas on which costs are reduced.

We believe that if Tower Hamlets Council wishes to continue providing language lessons to local children, a long term framework is necessary. As such we propose creating a private trading company for Childhood Language Learning. This body would aim to be entirely self funding, and provide language learning at no cost to Tower Hamlets Council.

We note that Council Officers have already priced up both the per hour cost of the Mother Tongue programme (£2.50) and have investigated how much ESOL learners would be willing to pay. Therefore, we suggest imposing a £2.50 cost-price hourly

charge for children attending mother tongue. This sum is considerably cheaper than comparable private sector teaching

The Council's private trading company for childhood language learning would be able to:

- Increase the number of languages it teaches, to include world languages for all communities, as well as European language not currently taught in local schools, for example Portuguese, Italian and Russian;
- Seek opportunities in other Boroughs to teach languages to children. This would take advantage of Tower Hamlets expertise in the area, whilst the funds generated from these ventures could then be used to subsidise teaching in Tower Hamlets, or even return funding to the main Tower Hamlets budget.

Annex II

Fund to Repay Debt Borrowed at Excessive Interest Rates

Tower Hamlets has accumulated a debt pile of £354million, and with the interest rates on this debt varying from 7.8% to 1.1%. The average interest rate for the £354 million of debt is 6.4%. Starting to pay down this amount of debt would result in significant ongoing savings from reduced debt interest payments. We propose to create a ringfenced 'Fund to Repay Debt Borrowed at Excessive Interest Rates' to paydown debt with excessive interest rates as and when opportunities arise. All accrued interest to stay in the fund.

APPENDIX C**Budget Motion moved by Cllr Stephanie Eaton (Liberal Democrat)
seconded by Cllr Fozol Miah (Respect)****A. This Council notes that:**

1. Tower Hamlets is required to reduce its budget by £72 million over 3 years.
2. Nonetheless the government has granted Tower Hamlets a special transition grant of £4.143 million.
3. The government has also introduced a pupil premium which will be worth approximately £9 million to support the education of the most deprived children in the Borough.
4. The government has also increased the ability of the Council to manage its finances efficiently and effectively with the removal of ring-fenced budgets.
5. Tower Hamlets Homes has been granted £95.4 million to improve the Borough's council housing stock.
6. The Mayor has stated his intention to review East End Life by May 2011.
7. Under the previous Labour administration the Council wasted funds on publicity photographs by millionaire fashion photographer Rankin; held a Senior Management Team awayday in a hotel in Greenwich; paid for expensive celebrity guest speakers at staff awards ceremonies; and presided over an inflated communications department.

B. This Council notes that the proposals put forward by the Mayor and Cabinet will ensure that:

1. Every children's centre will remain open.
2. Out-of-school hours activities will remain available for every child.

3. Homecare services for eligible residents will continue to be free; and Tower Hamlets will be the only local authority in the country to provide these services free.
4. Resident parking permits, visitor Scratch cards and short stay parking charges will be frozen at 2010/11 levels.
5. There will be no reductions to concessions at leisure centres and no increases above the rate of inflation in 'on the door' pay and play charges for sports and leisure facilities.
6. There will be no increases above the rate of inflation for hire of premises run by the arts and events team, e.g. for the Brady Centre.
7. Fees and charges will remain the same for street and market traders for 2011/12 for the third successive year.
8. Council tax will not increase in 2011/2012

C. This Council:

1. Supports the goals of the Mayor and Cabinet to protect front line services, and minimise job losses.
2. Supports the Mayor and Cabinet's approach to General Fund reserves, recognising that it is prudent to place additional resources in the General Fund reserves due to strategic financial risks.
3. Confirms that young people, employment and housing are among this Council's highest priorities.

D. This Council amends the budget put forward by the Mayor as follows:

1. To use previously unallocated capital funding of £2.9 million pounds in order to increase social housing, and release the following 'earmarked' reserves for the immediate benefit of the Borough:

Single status reserve £1 million

Chief Executive's reserve £0.7 million

This comprises a total of £4.6 million to be put to immediate use in major funding initiatives to reflect the Council's priorities of young people, employment and housing.

E. This Council resolves:

1. To apply £1.04million to support apprenticeships, leadership training and new graduate employment initiatives over 3 years. That the Corporate Directors of Development and Renewal and Children's Services bring forward proposals to be included the Mayor's forthcoming employment strategy.

A total of £1.04 million to develop apprenticeships, leadership training and new graduate employment initiatives in the borough.

2. To offer additional school subsidy for the Junior Youth Service and extended schools provision at the level of 2011/12. To do this by offering a ninth school £15K start up funding on the same basis as the Mayor's budget proposal and an additional £5K per school on the basis that they maintain prevailing charging policies for 2011/12. In so doing this Council will continue to support working and non working families who require after school childcare. The proposal is to support this service with a total of £0.06 million pounds in 2011/12.

A total of £0.06 million of support to families and schools for the provision of after school childcare and youth services.

3. To allocate £3.5 million of capital to increase affordable housing in the Borough. Measures to include but not limited to:

- knock-through of apartments to provide larger family sized accommodation – number to be determined by demand, suitability of site, and cost.

- Leaseholder buy-backs
- Development of new housing schemes (see below at 4.)

A total of £3.5 million to increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough.

4. To make available the site at 585 - 593 Commercial Road E1 0HJ for development with the aim of maximizing the provision of high quality social rented housing

- The practice of removing and storing illegally parked vehicles at the car pound on 585 - 593 Commercial Road is to be discontinued. Therefore, the site will no longer be required for that use, and the land is available for development. The value of the land is approximately £5 million. Subject to planning permission and with the support of a development partner, making the site available for redevelopment provides an opportunity for substantial numbers of new homes in the Borough.

Approx £5.0 million land value to develop high quality social housing to provide a maximum number of social rented homes on the site of the former car pound at 585 - 593 Commercial Road.

F. This Council notes:

that as a result of these proposals the Tower Hamlets Council Tax at Band D for 2011/12 will remain at £885.52 and the Local Priorities Capital Programme for 2010/11 - 2013/14 will increase to £50.690m.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 8 MARCH 2011

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

Members Present:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed	Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shelina Aktar	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Anna Lynch
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Councillor Craig Aston	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Lutfu Begum	Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer
Councillor Mizan Chaudhury	Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zara Davis	Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Judith Gardiner	Councillor Gloria Thienel
Councillor Carlo Gibbs	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Ann Jackson	

The Chair of Council, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman, in the Chair

Mr Bill Wakefield

Before commencing the formal business of the meeting, the Chair stated that Members would be aware of the recent sad death of ex-Councillor Bill Wakefield. Mr Wakefield had been a strong trade union members, an activist in many campaigns and a Councillor for the Limehouse Ward from 1995 to 1998.

At the invitation of the Chair, Members, officers and the public all stood to observe a minute's silence in memory of Mr Bill Wakefield.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Rajib Ahmed, Mohammed Mukit and Abdal Ullah and for lateness from Councillor Zara Davis.

RESOLVED

That the apologies for absence and lateness be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this meeting.

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

No announcements were made at this meeting.

4. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2011/12

Mayor Lutfur Rahman introduced his revised budget proposals. In relation to the items included in the substantive motion agreed at the Council Meeting on 23rd February which were not included in the Mayor's initial budget proposals, the Mayor reported as follows:-

Employment Initiatives and Affordable Housing: The Mayor accepted the proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrat and Respect Members on these matters and had amended his proposals accordingly.

Housing Link and Support to the Mayor and Councillors: The Mayor accepted the proposals by the Labour Group on these matters and had amended his proposals accordingly.

Extended Schools: The Mayor noted the proposal from the Labour Group on this matter. However the Liberal Democrat and Respect amendment, accepted by the Mayor at the previous meeting, would provide substantially the same outcome at a lower cost and he had therefore incorporated the latter amendment into his proposals.

East End Life: The Mayor stated in light of officer advice that there were financial risks associated with moving to a quarterly publication as the savings may be offset by lost income from advertising, he was unwilling to pre-empt the outcome of the review. He therefore proposed to set a saving of at least £200,000 to be achieved as a result of the review of East End Life but not to make a decision on the frequency or format of the review until the review has reported back with fully costed proposals.

Community Safety: The Mayor stated that he was in discussion with the Borough Commander to enhance police provision by providing 21 new officers, using a combination of funding from the new Community Safety Fund allocated to each Borough by the GLA and drugs action funding. On the basis of the discussions so far, he was confident that the Council would have a considerable say in how the new officers are utilised. This proposal would allow for four more police officers than the Labour Group's proposals without the need to cut THEOs. The Mayor was therefore unable to accept the Labour proposal.

Adventure Play: The Mayor stated that he had allocated £50,000 to Bartlett Park and Whitehorse Road adventure playgrounds. In addition, he had accepted a £60,000 saving from the Communications department to add to the resources for adventure play.

Allocation to reserves: The Mayor accepted officers' advice on the risks to the Council of not maintaining reserves at a safe and prudent level and the amendments he had outlined meant that there was no need to reduce the planned contribution to General Reserves of £3m recommended by officers.

The Mayor's revised proposals would confirm a Tower Hamlets Council Tax of £885.52 at Band D for 2011/12, which was no increase on 2010/11.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED**, and Councillor Rabina Khan **SECONDED** the revised budget proposals of the Mayor and Executive.

Councillor Helal Abbas then **MOVED** and Councillor David Edgar **SECONDED** an **amendment** as follows:–

“This Council notes:

1. The scale of the cuts imposed on public services, families and individuals by the Conservative-led government and their Liberal Democrat partners.
2. That Tower Hamlets Council is facing cuts of £72million over the next three years.
3. The decision of the Cabinet under the previous Labour administration that the priority in responding to the government's cuts be protecting the delivery of frontline services by reducing layers of management, cutting agency staff, tougher deals with suppliers, using fewer buildings, and other measures.
4. Assurances that after school childcare provision (formerly part of the Junior Youth Service) can be maintained in nine schools, open to working and non-working parents with no increase in charges and with no reduction in the number of places, can be provided at a total cost to the Council of £180,000.

This Council believes:

1. The Government is cutting too fast and too deeply with damaging consequences for the people of Tower Hamlets.

This Council welcomes:

1. The inclusion in the Mayor's revised budget motion of those Labour Group amendments which he accepted at the budget meeting on 23 February.
2. The additional 21 police officers proposed to be funded by the Community Safety Fund allocated to the borough by the Greater London Authority, drugs action funding and Metropolitan Police Authority funding allocated by the Borough Police Commander, but notes that these additional police should be seen in the context of:
 - The Joint Enforcement Teams comprising 20 police officers that the Council paid for in 2009/10 and 2010/11 coming to an end on 31 March 2011
 - The comment in the letter from the London Deputy Mayor for Policing that "... the Home Office has identified that the Community Safety Funding will reduce further for 2012/13 meaning a 60% reduction in total on the 2010/11 baseline"
 - Reports that there may be a reduction in the number of Police Sergeants in Safer Neighbourhood Teams across London including Tower Hamlets
 - Reports that there has been a fall in the number of police officers in post over the last two years.

This Council resolves to amend the Independent Mayor's revised budget motion as follows:

1. To include funding of £180,000 for after school childcare provision in the budget on an ongoing basis, rather than as seed funding in 2011/12 only.
2. East End Life - in line with the Government's Local Authority Publicity Code to reduce publication to quarterly with a saving of £200,000.
3. Community Safety - add 17 police officers - one per ward - to the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, meeting with local residents at Ward Panels, to replace the current team of Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers with effect from 1 July at net saving in 2011/12 of £25,000 and a net saving in 2012/13 of £180,000. The Mayor to investigate whether the cost of paying for the additional police officers can be reduced by making use of the "buy one, get one free" offer from the Metropolitan Police Authority.
4. Invest £25,000 in children's play projects.

5. Confirm a Council Tax for Tower Hamlets of £885.52 at Band D for 2011/12, which is no increase on 2010/11.

This Council further resolves:

1. That the use of funding for the employment initiatives proposal accepted by the Mayor should be the subject of detailed plans in respect of outputs and providers as a part of his Employment Strategy. The Strategy should be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and to the Full Council for agreement.
2. That the buy-back element of affordable housing proposal accepted by the Mayor should be subject to an appraisal of whether buy-backs represent the best value for money as a way of increasing the supply of family-sized or other affordable housing, and if they do not represent best value, make use of other options for increasing affordable housing.
3. To carry out reviews of the impact of the following savings proposals on service users (involving their families, advocates and friends where appropriate) and report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council by the end of October 2011 in time for the results of the reviews to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13:
 - Promoting independence and reducing demand for domiciliary care through reablement
 - Better use of supported housing
 - Modernising learning disability day services
 - Redesign and integration of early years and children's centres management.
4. To ensure that the equalities impact assessments for the impact of the budget savings are kept under review and updated and that the proposed Fairness Commission includes cross party representatives and reports in time for its conclusions to influence the budget setting process for 2012/13.

Councillor David Snowdon then **MOVED** and Councillor Timothy Archer **SECONDED** a further **amendment** as follows:–

“This Council notes:

1. The financial black hole inherited from Labour both at a national level and at the Council level;
2. That the Town Hall continues to waste money;
3. That residents have not been consulted over the budget proposals;

4. That the 34 residents who attended focus groups on the budget were concerned by the cost of East End Life.

This Council will:

5. Discontinue East End Life, and carry out statutory advertising through other newspapers. Compared to the Mayor's amended plans, this will provide a further saving of £50,000 in 2011/12.
6. Provide an additional 17 police officers, 1 for each ward. Under Mayor Boris Johnson's recently announced 'Buy One Get One Free' scheme for police officers, he would provide match funding for these posts and therefore provide an additional 17 police officers. This would lead to a total of 34 new police officers for Tower Hamlets. To fund the Council's new police officers, we would end the Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officer programme. This would provide a budget saving of £25,000 in 2011/12.
7. Spend the £75,000 savings on road repairs, in particular on mending pot holes, to take account of the high wear and tear caused by the hard winter.

Following debate, Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, indicated that the Mayor and Executive were unable to accept the amendments proposed by the Labour and Conservative Groups.

Point of personal explanation

At this point, Councillor David Edgar rose to give a personal explanation. Reference had been made during the debate to a series of budget savings proposals that Councillor Edgar had allegedly brought to the Labour Group under the previous administration. Councillor Edgar stated that this was false and asked that the statement be withdrawn. He had not brought forward a motion as described and all proposals had been reported to the Cabinet.

The amendment moved by Councillor Helal Abbas and Councillor David Edgar was then put to the vote.

At this point, more than ten Members rose to request a recorded vote. A recorded vote was therefore taken on the amendment and Members indicated their votes as follows:-

For the amendment (22 Councillors)

Councillor Helal Abbas
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Judith Gardiner

Councillor Carlo Gibbs
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman
Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Ann Jackson
Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Ann Lynch
Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

Against the amendment (18 Councillors)

Councillor Kabir Ahmed
Councillor Ohid Ahmed
Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Shelina Aktar
Councillor Shahed Ali
Councillor Abdul Asad
Councillor Lutfu Begum
Councillor Alibor Choudhury
Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Shafiqul Haque
Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Ahmed Omer
Councillor Oliur Rahman

Abstained from voting (8 Councillors)

Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Timothy Archer
Councillor Craig Aston
Councillor Zara Davis
Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Maium Miah
Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Gloria Thienel

The Service Head, Democratic Services announced that there had been 22 votes for and 18 votes against with 8 abstentions and the amendment had not achieved the two-thirds majority of Councillors present and voting that was required by the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules for an amendment to succeed at this meeting. The amendment was therefore **defeated**.

The amendment proposed by Councillor David Snowdon and Councillor Tim Archer was then put to the vote and was **defeated**.

As no amendment had achieved a two-thirds majority of Councillors present and voting on the matter, the Mayor's revised budget proposals were **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

A. General Fund Revenue Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2011/2012

1. That the budget proposals of the Mayor and Executive, included in the Budget Council Document Pack submitted to the Council Meeting on 23rd February 2011 and subsequently revised as set out at Appendix 1 to these minutes, be agreed.
2. That a total Budget Requirement for Tower Hamlets in 2011/12 of £310.960M be agreed.
3. That a Council Tax be agreed for Tower Hamlets in 2011/12 of £885.52 at Band D,
 - a) Resulting in a Council Tax for all other band taxpayers, before any discounts, and excluding the GLA precept, as set out in the Table below:-

BAND	PROPERTY VALUE		RATIO TO BAND D	LBTH COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH BAND £
	FROM	TO		
A	0	40,000	$\frac{6}{9}$	£590.35
B	40,001	52,000	$\frac{7}{9}$	£688.74
C	52,001	68,000	$\frac{8}{9}$	£787.13
D	68,001	88,000	$\frac{9}{9}$	£885.52

E	88,001	120,000	$\frac{11}{9}$	£1,082.30
F	120,001	160,000	$\frac{13}{9}$	£1,279.08
G	160,001	320,000	$\frac{15}{9}$	£1,475.87
H	320,001	and over	$\frac{18}{9}$	£1,771.04

4. That for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in 2011/12:-

(a) The Council Tax for Band D taxpayers, before any discounts, and including the GLA precept, shall be £1,195.34 as shown below: -.

£	
(Band D, No Discounts)	
LBTH	885.52
GLA	309.82
Total	1,195.34

(b) The Council Tax for taxpayers in all other bands, before any discounts, and including the GLA precept, shall be as detailed in the table below: -

BAND	PROPERTY VALUE		RATIO TO BAND D	LBTH £	GLA £	TOTAL £
	FROM	TO				
A	0	40,000	$\frac{6}{9}$	£590.35	£206.55	£796.90
B	40,001	52,000	$\frac{7}{9}$	£688.74	£240.97	£929.71
C	52,001	68,000	$\frac{8}{9}$	£787.13	£275.40	£1,062.53
D	68,001	88,000	$\frac{9}{9}$	£885.52	£309.82	£1,195.34
E	88,001	120,000	$\frac{11}{9}$	£1,082.30	£378.67	£1,460.97
F	120,001	160,000	$\frac{13}{9}$	£1,279.08	£447.52	£1,726.60

G	160,001	320,000	15/9	£1,475.87	£516.37	£1,992.24
H	320,001	and over	18/9	£1,771.04	£619.64	£2,390.68

5. That the statutory calculations of this Authority's total Budget requirement in 2011/12 as detailed in Appendix 2 to these minutes, undertaken by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with the requirements of Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, be agreed.
6. That subject to the revisions to the revenue budget set out at Appendix 1, the Capital Programme, Treasury Management Strategy, and Investment Strategy be approved as set out in the Budget Council Document Pack.

The meeting ended at 9.22 p.m.

Chair,
Council

APPENDIX 1**MAYORAL PROPOSAL FOR SECOND BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING
BUDGET AMENDMENTS 2011/12 BUDGET COUNCIL**

		£m
Budget Requirement (as per pack)		310.960
	Budget increases	Budget reductions (funding)
Use of Earmarked Reserves		1.640
Employment initiatives	1.040	
Contribution to Capital (*)	0.600	
Junior Youth Service	0.060	
Delete AHWB/1 Housing Link	0.252	
Delete CE/2 Democratic Services	0.243	
Housing Link revised saving		0.078
Support to Mayor & Councillors- non pay		0.082
Support to Mayor & Councillors- staffing		0.230
East End Life		0.200
Bartlett Park	0.060	
Communications Service		0.060
Allocation to reserves to balance	0.035	
Net change		0.000
Revised budget requirement		310.960
Formula Grant		-229.673
Collection Fund		-2.549
	Council Tax Requirement	78.738
	Council Tax Base	88917
Council Tax		
	Band A	590.35
	Band B	688.74
	Band C	787.13
	Band D	885.52
	Band E	1082.30
	Band F	1279.08
	Band G	1475.87
	Band H	1771.04

(*) in addition to £2.9m capital receipts, for affordable housing measures

APPENDIX 2

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
COUNCIL 8TH MARCH 2011
BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX STATUTORY CALCULATIONS**

**SETTING THE AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX FOR THE
COUNCIL'S AREA**

1. That the revenue estimates for 2011/2012 be approved.
2. That it be noted that, at its meeting on 12th January 2011, Cabinet calculated 88,917 as its Council Tax base for the year 2011/2012 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2011/2012 in accordance with Section 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended and the Local Authorities (Alteration of Requisite Calculations) (England) Regulations 2011:
 - (a) £987,896,000 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of The Act. [Gross Expenditure]
 - (b) £676,936,000 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of The Act. [Gross Income]
 - (c) £310,960,000 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 32(4) of The Act, as its budget requirement for the year. [Budget Requirement]
 - (d) £232,222,000 Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant and additional grant increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and reduced by the amount of any sum which the council estimates will be transferred from its general fund to its collection fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charges) directions

under Section 98(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. [Government Grants and Collection fund Adjustments]

- (e) £885.52 Being the amount at 3(c) above, less the amount at 3(d) above, all divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of The Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. [Council Tax]

(f)	VALUATION BAND	LBTH £
	A	£590.35
	B	£688.74
	C	£787.13
	D	£885.52
	E	£1,082.30
	F	£1,279.08
	G	£1,475.87
	H	£1,771.04

Being the amount given by multiplying the amount at 3(e) 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.

4. That it be noted that for the year 2011/12 the Greater London Authority 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 the dwellings shown below.

VALUATION BAND	GLA £
A	206.55
B	240.97
C	275.40
D	309.82
E	378.67
F	447.52
G	516.37
H	619.64

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(f) and 4 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 2011/12 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

VALUATION BAND	TOTAL COUNCIL TAX £
A	£796.60
B	£929.71
C	£1,062.53
D	£1,195.34
E	£1,460.97
F	£1,726.60
G	£1,992.24
H	£2,390.68

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

PETITIONS

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. The Council's constitution as amended provides that a maximum of three petitions are received at any meeting. These are taken in order of receipt. This report sets out the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 13th April 2011.
2. The deadline for receipt of petitions for this meeting is noon on Thursday 7th April. At the time of agenda despatch one petition had been received as set out overleaf. Any further valid petitions received before the deadline will be notified to Members separately.
3. In each case the petitioners may address the meeting for no more than three minutes. Members may then question the petitioners for a further four minutes. Finally, the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair of Committee may respond to the petition for up to three minutes.
4. Any outstanding issues will be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will respond to those outstanding issues in writing within 28 days.
5. Members should confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

5.1 Petition from Mr Brian Nicholson and others regarding East End Life

“We, the undersigned welcome the Mayor’s budget for rejecting the Tory proposal to abolish East End Life (EEL) and Labour’s proposal to make it quarterly. We believe that EEL performs an important role in keeping residents informed of the Council’s decisions and its services. The Harmony section, in particular makes the Bengali and the Somali communities feel part of what the Council is doing.

EEL provides the most cost effective means of advertising the Council’s statutory notices and other services such as housing options. Most of what it costs to run EEL is recouped through advertising revenue. Without the weekly EEL, the Council would have to advertise in a number of local newspapers to reach nearly as many people as EEL does. This would be very expensive. We believe it is not a viable option especially as we have to save every penny we can during these tough economic times.

We believe that EEL is a community asset without competing against or affecting local commercial newspapers. We would ask the Mayor to protect EEL and lobby against Eric Pickles’ attempts to impose a code on Council run papers which has no support at any level of local government.”

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by members of the public, for response by the appropriate Cabinet Member or committee chair at the Council Meeting on 13th April 2011.
2. The Council's Constitution sets a maximum time limit of twenty minutes for this item.
3. A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one brief supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Supplementary questions and Members' responses to written and supplementary questions are each limited to two minutes.
4. Any question which cannot be dealt with during the twenty minutes allocated for public questions, either because of lack of time or because of non-attendance of the questioner or the Member to whom it was put, will be dealt with by way of a written answer.
5. Unless the Chair of Council decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Member of the Council may move, without discussion, that the matter raised by a question be referred for consideration by the Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee.

QUESTIONS

Four questions have been submitted as set out below:-

6.1 Question from Mr. Glenn Power to the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

"Tower Hamlets achieved Fairtrade status in 2006. Volunteers on the steering group would like to know what measures the Council would consider taking to increase its support for fair trade. Could officers consult with other Fairtrade councils, such as Bristol and Newcastle, to learn from their best practice?"

6.2 Question from Ms. Clare Harrisson to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

"What is the Mayor doing to prevent the use of unlicensed mini cabs in the borough?"

6.3 Question from Ms. Seema Kapoor to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

"Does the Mayor recognise the unique, valuable and highly cost effective work done by the Family Play Project which operates on Saturday mornings and provides a family play environment for families of disabled children and their siblings? The families using the service were also unhappy at the nature of the consultation provided by the Council and had very little notice before their funding was cut.

The Mayor would be warmly welcomed if he wished to visit the project and see for himself the good work it does. Will he pledge to work with the project to ensure that it is able to continue?"

6.4 Question from Mr. James King to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

"Could the Mayor update us on the progress of the campaign to overturn the appalling decision made by the London 2012 Organising Committee to backtrack on the promise made to run the Olympic marathon through the East End?"

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by Members of the Council for response by Members of the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 13th April 2011.
2. Questions are limited to one per Member per meeting, plus one supplementary question unless the Member has indicated that only a written reply is required and in these circumstances a supplementary question is not permitted.
3. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. There is a time limit of thirty minutes for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any question not answered within this time will be dealt with by way of a written response. The Chair will decide the time allocated to each question.
5. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

19 questions have been received from Members of the Council as follows:-

8.1 Question from Councillor Kosru Uddin to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Given the impact of the recent cuts and loss of jobs and the subsequent rise in unemployment, in particular the significant rise in youth unemployment, what is the Mayor proposing to do to help address unemployment in the borough and help young residents who are out of work and bordering on the realms of disillusion and feelings of dejection?”

8.2 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“As previously stated, Parliament completed the process by March 31st to introduce a revised code of practice which will prevent local authorities from wasting taxpayers money on vanity newspapers such as East End Life. Therefore why is the Mayor persisting with his money wasting consultation exercise regarding East End Life?”

8.3 Question from Councillor David Edgar to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Could the Mayor report on the action he has taken to engage with local GPs and the Primary Care Trust on the transfer of health commissioning to GPs, with the PCT on the transfer of public health responsibilities to the Council, and with the PCT on the future of community health services in the borough?”

8.4 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Would the Mayor agree that there is a delicate balancing act between encouraging the vibrant atmosphere around Brick Lane and the scourge of anti-social behaviour afflicting both residents and visitors alike, and would he undertake an urgent investigation into the scale of the problem of anti-social behaviour and the measures that might be taken to address it?”

8.5 Question from Councillor Amy Whitelock to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“What assessment has the Mayor made of the impact that the Government's raft of welfare benefits changes, coming into force between 2011 and 2014, will have on Tower Hamlets residents?”

8.6 Question from Councillor Peter Golds to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Further to the Council Motion passed over two months ago regarding the Thames Water Tunnel, can the Mayor confirm that the support for the Thames Tunnel as proposed by Thames Water and agreed by his Cabinet in December 2010 has been withdrawn? Also, when will the Mayor be meeting with Thames Water to discuss alternative routes?”

8.7 Question from Councillor Bill Turner to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Can the Mayor tell me how he plans to reduce council expenditure on consultants and agency staff?”

8.8 Question from Councillor Harun Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Would the Mayor agree with me that there remains an acute shortage of homes in this borough for larger families, that urgent action needs to be taken to alleviate the scourge of overcrowding and that this could be achieved through buying back certain kinds of top floor flats which would allow dormer extensions to be built?”

8.9 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Can the Mayor update me on how successful the Council has been on tackling benefit fraud in the Borough?”

8.10 Question from Councillor Emma Jones to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Given the Council's health scrutiny review of access to GPs and dentists, how many residents of the borough are still not registered with a dentist?”

8.11 Question from Councillor Anwar Khan to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Does the Mayor support the MP for Poplar and Limehouse, Jim Fitzpatrick in his attempts to tackle the problem of legal loan sharks who charge extortionate interest rates to often vulnerable people and will he ensure the Council does everything in its power to prevent residents being exploited by them?”

8.12 Question from Councillor David Snowdon to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

How many staff does the Mayor directly employ in his office (including advisors and consultants), and what is the Mayor's Office Expenditure for this municipal year 2010/11 and for the next municipal year 2011/12?

8.13 Question from Councillor Anna Lynch to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Bearing in mind the previous administration’s decision to cut all catering except tea and coffee at meetings due to the pressures on the Council’s budget, can the Mayor tell me if he has maintained that policy and how much the Council has spent on refreshments for meetings involving him and/or his Cabinet since he took office?”

8.14 Question from Councillor Zara Davis to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“What progress has been made by the administration to find capital funding for the expansion of the Mudchute nursery?”

8.15 Question from Councillor Joshua Peck to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Rabina Khan

“What progress has been made in agreeing to create back gardens for residents at 1-8 Sheffield Square?”

8.16 Question from Councillor Craig Aston to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“The Olympic Delivery Authority has written to every London Borough offering to sell them Olympic tickets and it has been established that this letter and invitation has been received by Tower Hamlets Council. Does the Mayor and this Council intend to purchase any tickets for the Olympics Games and if so, what is the cost and what will be done with them?”

8.17 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

“Could I be advised what plans the Council has for an alternative to the cancelled East End Gay Pride event to enable residents of Tower Hamlets to demonstrate unity, solidarity and friendship with LGBT residents of the Borough?”

8.18 Question from Councillor Maium Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Will the Mayor update me and residents as to what progress has been made to reinstate parking provision for the residents of Phoenix Heights, Byng Street?”

8.19 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Following the revelation that members of this Council used Council facilities to provide testimonials to a Court for a convicted sex offender, what proposals does the Mayor have to tighten up procedures to ensure that this does not happen again?”

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2011/12

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Part 6 of the Council's Constitution sets out the Scheme of Members' Allowances. This provides for a Mayor's Allowance to be paid to the Mayor; a Basic Allowance to all Councillors; Special Responsibility Allowances for specified member roles; Dependants' Carers' and Travel/Subsistence Allowances; and an attendance allowance for co-opted members of the Standards and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.2 By law the Council must agree the Scheme of Members' Allowances annually, before the start of the year to which it applies. The proposed Scheme of Members Allowances for 2011/12 is attached at Appendix 'A' to this report. This incorporates the changes agreed by the Council at the Budget meeting (i.e. Mayor's Allowance and Councillors' Basic Allowance to be frozen and Special Responsibility Allowances to be reduced by 5%) but is otherwise unchanged from the 2010/11 Scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Members' Allowances Scheme at Part 6 of the Constitution be re-adopted for 2011/12, subject to the Mayor's Allowance and Basic Allowance being frozen at the current rate and the Special Responsibility Allowances being reduced by 5% as agreed at the Council's Budget meeting; and
- 2.2 That accordingly the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members' Allowances Scheme 2011 be adopted as at Appendix 'A';

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Statutory Instrument (SI 1021/2003) the Council is required to agree a Scheme of Members' Allowances on an annual basis. The Scheme may include an annual index-linked adjustment of allowances, but it must be subject to a full review at least every four years, taking into account the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 3.2 The current scheme is included at Part 6 of the Council's Constitution and it is proposed that this should be re-adopted, updated in accordance with the changes agreed by the Council at the Budget Meeting but with no other substantive changes, for 2011/12 as set out at Appendix 'A' to this report.
- 3.3 The recommendations in this report are presented at this stage to satisfy the legal requirement to adopt the scheme prior to the start of the year to which it applies and thereby enable Members' allowances to be paid during 2011/12.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 The scheme includes provision for indexing Members' Allowances in line with the local government pay settlement but the Council has agreed that in respect of the Mayor's Allowance and Basic Allowance this will not apply during 2011/12. Any costs arising from the indexing of other allowances (e.g. Dependants' Carers' and Co-optees' Allowances) will be met from within existing budgets.

5. COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 5.1 Legal comments have been incorporated within the body of the report.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR ONE TOWER HAMLETS

- 6.1 The payment of Members' Allowances helps to ensure that people from all parts of the community within the borough are able to serve as elected members. This promotes effective community leadership and accountability, to the benefit of the whole borough and all its communities.

7. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT (SAGE)

- 7.1 There are no direct SAGE implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"	Name/telephone number of holder
---	---------------------------------

None.

APPENDIX 'A'

London Borough of Tower Hamlets: Members' Allowances Scheme

(Part 6 of the Council's Constitution)

This Scheme is made by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended.

1. This Scheme shall be called The London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members' Allowances Scheme 2011 and it shall come into effect on 1 April 2011. The Scheme shall apply to the Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Basic Allowance

2. Subject to paragraph 8, a basic allowance of £10,065* shall be paid to each Councillor for each year. The Basic Allowance shall not be payable to the elected Mayor.
3. The basic allowance of £10,065* shall be payable with effect from 1 April 2011.

*[*Note: Paragraph 11 of this scheme provides for the amounts marked * to be adjusted with effect from 1st April 2011 to reflect the annual pay settlement for local government staff when this is agreed. However, the Council has agreed that in respect of the Basic Allowance and the Mayor's Allowance this provision shall not apply during 2011/12]*

Special Responsibility Allowance

4. Subject to paragraphs 5-8, a special responsibility allowance shall be paid for each year to those Members who hold a position of special responsibility as specified in Schedule 1.
5. The amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified against the respective special responsibility in Schedule 1 and it shall be payable with effect from 1 April 2011.
6. Any special responsibility allowance payable under paragraphs 4 and 5 shall be in addition to the basic allowance payable under paragraph 2 above.
7. Any Member who holds more than one position of special responsibility shall receive only one special responsibility allowance which shall be at the higher level.

Part-Year Entitlement

8. If, in the course of the year, this scheme is amended or a Member's entitlement changes, the relevant basic and/or special responsibility allowance shall be calculated and paid pro-rata during the particular month in which the scheme amendment or entitlement change occurs.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance

9. A maximum of £7.26* per hour shall be paid to those Members who necessarily incur expense in arranging for the care of their children or other dependants to enable them to undertake any of the activities specified in Schedule 2 to this Scheme.
10. The following conditions shall apply:
 - payments shall be claimable for children aged 15 or under or for other dependants where there is medical or social work evidence that care is required;
 - only one weekly payment shall be claimable for the household of each Member, unless the Council's Standards Committee considers there are special circumstances;
 - the allowance shall be paid as a re-imbusement of incurred expenditure against receipts;
 - the allowance shall not be payable to a member of the claimant's own household;
 - any dispute as to entitlement and any allegation of abuse shall be referred to the Council's Standards Committee for adjudication.

Indexation

11. The Basic, Special Responsibility, Mayor's and Dependants' Carers' Allowances shall be adjusted annually to reflect the annual pay settlement for local government staff. The adjustment shall take effect on 1 April in each year, or the date on which the settlement takes effect, if later.

*[*Note: The Council has agreed that in respect of the Basic Allowance and the Mayor's Allowance the above provision shall not apply during 2011/12]*

Travel and Subsistence Allowance

12. An allowance shall be paid to any Member for travelling and subsistence undertaken outside the Borough in connection with any of the duties specified in Schedule 2.

13. An allowance shall be paid to a co-opted member of a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of the Council for travelling and subsistence in connection with any of the duties specified in Schedule 2, irrespective of whether the meeting or duty is inside or outside the Borough.
14. The amounts payable shall be the amounts which are for the time being payable to officers of the Council for travelling and subsistence undertaken in the course of their duties.

Co-optees' Allowance

15. Subject to paragraph 16, a co-opted member of the Standards Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Health Scrutiny Panel may claim a co-optees' allowance of £117* and the Independent Chair of the Standards Committee may claim a co-optees' allowance of £240*, for attendance at any meeting of the Committee or the Panel or attendance at any conference or training event, where attendance is on behalf of and authorised by the Council.
16. A claim for co-optees' allowance shall be made in writing within two months from the date of attendance at the meeting, conference or training event.
17. Where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his or her responsibilities or duties as a co-opted member under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, any co-optee's allowance payable to him or her for the period for which he or she is suspended or partially suspended, may be withheld by the Council.

Suspension of Allowances

18. Where the Mayor or a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended from his or her responsibilities or duties as a member of the Council under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, or Regulations made under that Part, the part of the basic and special responsibility allowance or any travelling or subsistence allowance payable to him or her for the period for which he or she is suspended or partially suspended, may be withheld by the Council.

Recovery of Allowances Paid

19. Any allowance that has been paid to a Member whilst on suspension or after he or she has ceased to be a member of the Council, or is for some other reason not entitled to receive the allowance for a specified period, may be recovered.

Claims and Payments

20. Subject to paragraph 22, payments shall be made for basic and special responsibility allowances in instalments of one-twelfth of the amounts

respectively specified in this Scheme, paid on the last working day of each month.

21. Where a payment of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this Scheme for a basic or special responsibility allowance will result in the Member receiving more than the amount to which he or she is entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.
22. A claim for travelling and subsistence or dependants' carers' allowance;
 - shall be made in writing within two months from the date of the performance of the duty for which the claim is made;
 - shall be accompanied by receipts and/or any relevant evidence of the costs incurred.
 - shall be subject to such validation and accounting procedures as the Council's Corporate Director, Resources may from time to time prescribe.
23. Travelling and subsistence and dependants' carers' allowance shall be paid on the last working day of each month for any claim received not less than 14 days before that date.

Pensions

24. Any Member under the age of 75 shall be entitled to join the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Government Pension Scheme. Both basic and special responsibility allowances shall be treated as pensionable pay for the purposes of the scheme.

Records of Allowances and Publications

25. The Council shall keep a record of payments made by it under this Scheme, including the name of the recipients of the payment and the amount and nature of each payment.
26. The record of the payments made by the Council under this Scheme shall be available at all reasonable times for inspection at no charge. A copy shall also be supplied to any person who requests it on payment of a reasonable fee.
27. As soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the year to which this Scheme relates, the Council shall make arrangements to publish the total sums paid by it to each recipient for each different allowance.
28. A copy of the Scheme shall be supplied to any person who requests it on payment of a reasonable fee.

Renunciation

- 29.** A member may at any time and for any period, by notice in writing given to the Chief Executive, elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme.

Interpretation

- 30.** In this scheme:

- “Councillor” means an elected member of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets who is a councillor;
- “Mayor” means the elected Mayor of Tower Hamlets Council
- “Member” means any person who is either the Mayor, a councillor or a co-opted member of Tower Hamlets Council;
- “Co-opted member” means any person who is not a Councillor but who sits on a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of the Council.
- “Year” means the 12 months ending on 31 March in any year;

Revocation

- 31.** The London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members’ Allowance Scheme 2010 is hereby revoked.

SCHEDULE 1

Special Responsibility Allowance

The following are specified as the special responsibilities for which special responsibility allowances are payable and the amounts of those allowances:

	£
Mayor	65,000 *
Deputy Mayor	14,742 *
Leader of the Majority Group on the Council	12,658 *
Leader of any other Group with over 6 Councillors	10,174 *
Leader of any Group with up to 6 Councillors (subject to having at least 10% of the Council)	5,531 *
Cabinet Members	12,658 *
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10,174 *
Chair of Health Scrutiny Panel	7,557 *
Lead Members for Scrutiny	7,557 *
Chair of Development Committee	10,174 *
Chairs of Licensing, Appeals and General Purposes Committees	7,557 *
Chairs of Audit, Human Resources and Pensions Committees	5,531 *
Olympics Ambassador	5,531 *
Chair of Council	7,557 *
Deputy Chair of Council	3,777 *

*[*Note: Paragraph 11 of this scheme provides for the amounts marked * to be adjusted with effect from 1st April 2011 to reflect the annual pay settlement for local government staff when this is agreed. However, the Council has agreed that in respect of the Basic Allowance and the Mayor's Allowance this provision shall not apply during 2011/12]*

SCHEDULE 2

Dependants' Carers' and Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

The duties for which these allowances are payable include:

- the attendance at a meeting of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee of the Council or of any other body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body;
- the attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the Council, or a committee or sub-committee of the Council, or a joint committee of 270(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee, provided that –
- where the Council is divided into two or more political groups it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited; or
- if the Council is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the Council have been invited
- the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the Council is a member;
- the attendance at a meeting of the Cabinet or a meeting of any of its committees, where the Council is operating executive arrangements;
- the performance of any duty in pursuance of any standing order under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Council to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises.
- the performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the Council for the attendance of pupils at any school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996 (approval of non-maintained special schools); and
- the carrying out of any other duty approved by the Council, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Council or any of its committees or sub-committees.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2011/12

REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report requests the Council to agree the programme of Council, Committee and other meetings for the forthcoming municipal year.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Council approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2011/12 as set out at Appendix A.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council Procedure Rules provide for the Council to agree a programme of meetings for each municipal year. This is traditionally agreed at the final Council meeting prior to the start of the municipal year to enable efficient agenda planning. A draft schedule of Council, Cabinet, main committee and panel meetings is therefore proposed for adoption at Appendix A.

- 3.2 The draft programme attached follows the pattern established in previous years in terms of frequency of meetings, start times and meeting days for the various committees, adapted to address any issues that have arisen during the year and taking into account officer advice on service requirements.

- 3.3 Key points to note in relation to 2011/12 include:-

- Full Council meetings have been scheduled taking into account the reporting timetable for Budget and Policy Framework items. There is no longer a requirement to produce a Best Value Performance Plan before 30th June so the first ordinary Council meeting has been scheduled for 13th July 2011 to achieve a more even distribution of meetings through the year.
- The Budget Council Meeting is programmed for 22nd February 2011. As in the current year, an additional Council Meeting is scheduled (in late January) to conduct 'ordinary' business.
- As far as possible meetings are avoided during the school summer holidays and the major political party conferences. Ramadan falls from approximately 1st August to 31st August 2011. Meetings during Ramadan are minimised and

where they are necessary a 5.30 p.m. start time is proposed to enable them to end before Iftar.

- The Licensing Sub-Committee and Appeals Committee have each been programmed to meet on a fortnightly basis to avoid the need for numerous extraordinary meetings, and on various days of the week to accommodate Member availability. These committees and the Development/Strategic Development committees, will continue to meet during August to avoid delay to the regulatory work of the authority.
- In accordance with Procedure Rule 5.1 the start time for most main committees has been standardised at 7.30 pm (7.00 pm in the case of the Overview & Scrutiny, Appeals, Audit and Development committees where meetings are often of relatively longer duration). Most sub-committees and panels are scheduled for 6.30 pm. The Procedure Rule provides for start times to be reviewed by the relevant Chair as necessary.
- Investment Panel meetings are held immediately before the Pensions Committee to facilitate Member attendance.

4. Observations of the Chief Financial Officer

4.1 There are no specific financial comments arising from this report.

5. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

5.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

6. Implications for One Tower Hamlets

6.1 In drawing up this schedule of meetings, consideration has been given where possible to avoiding school holidays, known religious holidays and other dates which could inhibit attendance or participation by one or more section(s) of the borough's community.

7. Anti-Poverty Implications

7.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising from the proposals in this report.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 The Council needs to have in place a programme of meetings to ensure effective and efficient decision-making arrangements.

9. Strategic Action for a Greener Environment

9.1 No implications arising from this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection
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None.

APPENDIX A - DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2011/2012 MUNICIPAL YEAR

	USUAL MEETING DAY	MAY '11	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY '12
COUNCIL	WEDNESDAY (7.30pm)	18 (Annual)		13		14		30		25	22 (Budget)		18	16 (Annual)
CABINET	WEDNESDAY (5.30 pm)	11	8	6	3	7	5	2	7	11	8	7	4	9
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	TUESDAY (7.00pm)	10	7	5	2 5.30pm	6	4	1	6	10	7	6	3	8
HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL	TUESDAY (6.30pm)		21	26			18			24			24	
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	THURSDAY (7.00pm)	12	23		4 5.30pm	15	27		8	19		1	12	31 (7 wks)
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	WEDNESDAY (7.00pm)	4	1, 29	27	24 5.30pm	21	19	16	14	11	8	8 (Thurs)	5 (Thurs)	9 (5 wks)
LICENSING COMMITTEE	TUESDAY (7.30pm)		14			20			13			27		
LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE	TUESDAY OR THURSDAY (6.30pm)	10, 17	21	7, 19, 26	2, 18	8, 22	6, 18	3, 15, 29	13, 20	12, 24	9, 21	8, 20	2, 19	15
STANDARDS COMMITTEE	TUESDAY (7.30pm)			19			11			17			17	

	USUAL MEETING DAY	MAY '11	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY '12
APPEALS COMMITTEE	MONDAY OR TUESDAY (7.00pm)	16, 31	13, 28	11, 26	8, 23	5, 19	3, 17, 31	14, 29	12	9, 25	6, 21	5, 19	2, 16	14
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	WEDNESDAY (7.30pm)		22			28			13 (Tues)			21		
AUDIT COMMITTEE	TUESDAY (7.00pm)		28			27			12 (Mon)			20		
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	WEDNESDAY (7.30pm)			20			26			18			25	
PENSIONS COMMITTEE	THURSDAY (7.30pm)		9	21				17			16			
INVESTMENT PANEL	THURSDAY (5.30pm)		9	21				17			16			
GRANTS PANEL	WEDNESDAY (6.30pm)		15				20 (Thurs)				14, 21			
KING GEORGE'S FIELD CHARITY BOARD	WEDNESDAY (6.30pm)	4		20				23			15			8 (Tues)

NOTES:

- OTHER MEETINGS including Appointments Sub-Committee arranged on an ad hoc basis as required.
- BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX SETTING: Statutory deadline 11th March. Date of meeting set to enable receipt of GLA precept information.
- ELECTIONS: Referendum – 5th May 2011 GLA Elections – 3rd May 2012
- EASTER 2012: Good Friday 6th April 2012, Easter Monday 9th April 2012.
- RAMADAN provisional dates: 1st August 2011 – 30th August 2011 (to be confirmed)
- EID-UL-ADHA provisional date: 6th November 2011, ASHURA: 5th December 2011
- YUM KIPPUR – 8th October 2011
- Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II – Tuesday 5th June 2012 (and Spring Bank Holiday for 28th May 2012 to be moved to Monday 4th June 2012)

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Eight motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 13th April 2011.
2. In accordance with the protocol agreed by the Council on 21st May 2008, the order in which the motions are listed is by turns, one from each group, continuing in rotation until all motions submitted are included. The rotation starts with any group(s) not reached at the previous meeting.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf are the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 Motion regarding Mr John Onslow

Proposed by: Cllr Joshua Peck

Seconded by: Cllr Anwar Khan

This Council notes

- The long-standing service to the Council, its employees and the residents of this borough of GMB steward, John Onslow, who died in 2008.

This Council resolves

- To mark John's commitment to Tower Hamlets by renaming Gladstone Place 'John Onslow Place'

12.2 Motion regarding character references

Proposed by: Cllr Peter Golds

Seconded by: Cllr Tim Archer

This Council notes that:

- Council staff have produced at least 120 character references on behalf of the Executive Mayor and Councillors since the May 2010 elections.
- The recent case of an unlicensed cab driver, jailed for sexual assault, who was reported to have provided character references from the Executive Mayor and 'several' Councillors prior to his being sent to jail.

This Council believes that:

- it is appropriate for councillors, on occasion, to provide character references and testimonials for outside bodies; but
- that members of the Council should be entirely responsible for references and testimonials that they provide to residents; and
- that Council staff time should not be expended in the production of these.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- to instruct the Standards Committee to revise the existing guidance to state that:
 - a) Council staff should not be involved in the production of character references, as long as members of the Council have access to Council stationery to produce references as they see fit; and
 - b) All copies of character references and testimonials used for judicial and governmental agencies produced on Council stationery must be logged with the Monitoring Officer, who should keep a record of the number and type of such references and testimonials.

12.3 Motion regarding fair trade

Proposed by: Cllr Rania Khan
Seconded by: Cllr Alibor Choudhury

This Council notes:

- That fairly traded products guarantee stable, living wage prices to producers in poor countries around the world and fund community development projects including safe drinking water schemes, basic medical facilities and education.
- That Tower Hamlets was the first London borough to introduce the living wage when Mayor Lutfur Rahman was Leader of the Council.

This Council believes:

- That strengthening our commitment to Fairtrade entails exploring all opportunities for the Council to procure fairly traded products including giving clear guidelines to our procurement officers.
- That the Council should promote a culture of using and sourcing fairly traded products.

This Council resolves:

- To promote fairly traded products in Council's catering services to schools, social services, Ideas Stores and Council offices with vending machines.
- To include fairly traded products as part of the tender specifications of future catering contracts.
- To ask existing contractors to source fairly traded products at no extra cost.
- To promote our commitment to fairly traded products to local statutory, voluntary and faith organisations.
- To encourage our residents to use fairly traded products by occasional Council publicity.

12.4 Motion regarding the living wage and private contractors

Proposed by: Cllr Fozol Miah
Seconded by: Cllr Harun Miah

This Council notes that:

- 1) this Council has a policy of paying at least a "living wage" to its employees
- 2) the decision to become a "living wage" council, following the campaign by Telco and others, was a great step forward for the low paid in this borough
- 3) a number of companies which the council contracts to supply services in this borough do not pay a living wage to their low paid employees

This Council urges the Mayor:

- 1) To carry out an investigation of all companies which the council currently has contracts with to determine whether they pay at least the living wage to their employees
- 2) To investigate the legal means to force companies to pay the living wage where they are not doing so under threat of losing their contracts if they fail to do so
- 3) To investigate ensuring that the awarding of future contracts is confined to companies that have a “living wage” policy
- 4) To lobby the Government to change the law where necessary to allow the council to make contractors comply with the “living wage” policy of this Council.

12.5 Motion regarding defending the Local Government Pension Scheme

Proposed by: Cllr Joshua Peck
Seconded by: Cllr Helal Uddin Abbas

This Council Notes:

- The LGPS is a sustainable, good quality pension scheme that benefits from being funded and locally managed. It is valuable to employers and employees alike.
- Successive governments have failed to recognise the distinctiveness of the LGPS in setting policy, most notably in the proposal announced by the Chancellor in the last CSR to impose an extra 3.2% contribution tax on scheme members, increasing scheme average member contributions from 6.6% to 9.8%.
- This tax does not benefit the scheme or scheme members or employers.
- This proposal is in addition to pension reductions caused by being indexed against CPI instead of RPI and is in advance of recommendations now published by the Hutton Review.

This Council further notes:

- That an increase in member contributions as proposed will lead to mass opt outs from the LGPS and that would be undesirable and damaging. The views expressed by the LGA in its letter to the Chancellor dated 16 February 2011 on this subject are also the views of this Council.

This Council Resolves:

- To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of State for Local Government within the next month stating this Council’s support for LGA’s position and calling for government to rethink its proposed increases to LGPS member contributions.
- To work with Trade Unions to ensure employees are made aware of the proposals for the LGPS and to encourage them to support the Council’s representations to defend their pension scheme.

12.6 Motion regarding Housing Benefit changes

Proposed by: Councillor Rabina Khan

Seconded by: Councillor Alibor Choudhury

This Council notes that:

- On 1 April 2011 several of the Government's measures to reduce Housing Benefit came into effect.
- The first of these measures will increase the level of deductions made to housing benefit to households which are shared by non-dependant adults, such as adult children.
- The second of these measures will remove the increased rate of housing benefit for a 5 bedroom house, capping the maximum rate of housing benefit applicable for a 4 bedroom house.
- This Council has one of the worst overcrowding problems in London – there are 9,387 houses that are overcrowded
- The Council has a good track record of projects to reduce overcrowding in the borough

This Council believes that:

- These measures are a deliberate attempt at social engineering
- These measures will have an adverse and disproportionate effect on residents
- These measures will increase overcrowding in the borough
- Overcrowding is the cause of severe health problems and impacts negatively on the educational attainment of children.

This Council resolves:

- To lobby against the coalition government's policies which clearly have a discriminatory affect on residents
- To condemn these policies as discriminatory
- To offer support and guidance to families are adversely affected due to these changes

12.7 Motion regarding prejudice and Car Free Zones

Proposed by: Councillor Harun Miah

Seconded by: Councillor Fozol Miah

This Council notes that:

- 1) Many homes, including large family homes, built in recent years have been built in “car free zones”.
- 2) Large and poorer families in particular need large family cars for cheap and secure transport and to transport foodstuffs in bulk.
- 3) “Car free” homes therefore discriminate against larger and poorer families.

This Council urges the Mayor:

- 1) To lobby central government to repeal legislation and to seek changes to strategic planning which has imposed these “car free” homes on Tower Hamlets residents
- 2) To seek any loopholes that may exist to reduce the number of “car free” homes that currently exist or will be built in the future.
- 3) to seek to enable residents in “car free” homes access to at least one residents parking permit if needed.

12.8 Motion regarding helping overcrowded families

Proposed by: Cllr Marc Francis

Seconded by: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

This Council notes that:

- Tower Hamlets has amongst the highest levels of overcrowding in the country and thousands more on the Housing Waiting List;
- Overcrowded housing impacts severely on the health, education and life chances of young children;
- Tower Hamlets has long been at the forefront of innovative schemes to help overcrowded families;
- Tower Hamlets has seen the most social housing built of any local authority in London for several years, but that the Coalition Government has cut funding and will be refocusing what remains on Intermediate products and “affordable” rented homes;
- In 2009/10, Labour Group authorised a £20 million scheme to buy back former council homes sold under the Right to Buy so they could be re-let to overcrowded households using funding from Capital Reserves;
- This policy resulted in the purchase of eighty three and four-bedroom properties and helped over 200 families;

- The previous Labour Government introduced powers enabling local authorities to use Prudential Borrowing to fund capital projects, including the construction of new council housing;
- The previous Labour Government consulted on proposals to free the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from Whitehall control and retain capital receipts, and that this is due to be implemented from April 2012.

This Council believes that:

- Tackling overcrowding should be one of Tower Hamlets Council's over-riding political priorities and that additional measures need to be taken locally to offset the likely shortfall in social housing while the Coalition Government is in power;
- The pilot Buy Back scheme delivered real benefits, but is too capital intensive to be sustained over the longer-term;
- The model of 50 per cent capital funding and 50 per cent Prudential Borrowing provides a more sustainable approach, for example a capital outlay of £2.5 million would fund the purchase of between 20-25 ex-council flats and help rehouse around 50 overcrowded families.

This Council resolves:

- To call on the Mayor to instruct council officers to work up a second pilot scheme to Buy Back former council flats using a combination of the new freedoms for the HRA and powers of Prudential Borrowing;
- To call on the Mayor to also instruct Council officers to work up alternative options to Buy Backs to establish which option (including Buy Backs) provides the most scope for reducing overcrowding for equivalent amounts of money whilst maintaining social housing rent levels and achieving comparable timescales for delivery;
- To report back to councillors on their potential in advance of next year's Budget setting process.

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