


Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 20 January 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Divisional Director, Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motion for debate submitted by the Administration	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	All wards

SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one specific Motion submitted by the Administration. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. The Administration Motion is submitted by the Labour Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. 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in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.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. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

7 – Administration Motion for Debate - The Government must protect businesses and livelihoods in tower hamlets

Proposer: Mayor John Biggs

Seconder: Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

This Council notes:

1. A further national lockdown requires additional economic support across all sectors.
2. The Office for Budget Responsibility does not expect GDP to recover to pre-pandemic levels until late 2022.
3. Universal Credit – a lifeline to around 43,000 people in the borough – is due to be cut by £20 in April.
4. As a council we've stepped up to support our businesses and distributed over a million pounds to businesses.

This Council believes:

- That there is a potential catastrophic growth in unemployment and poverty for which we cannot prepare without adequate support from Government. To support families and individuals the Government must:
 1. avoid cliff edges and last-minute announcements and consider extending the furlough scheme beyond the end of April, further extending the bans on evictions and repossessions, and mortgage holidays
 2. maintain the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit which is currently due to be cut in April and which is a real lifeline to those that receive it and the local businesses where it is spent.
 3. set out additional support for the self-employed and working parents impacted by the closure of schools.
 4. give councils the resources to properly cover discretionary payments for the £500 isolation scheme, as boroughs like Tower Hamlets have seen a high uptake.
- As well as the impact on families and individuals, the continuing impact on our economy and businesses is deeply concerning. London's economy will continue to be severely impacted and is at risk from a 'triple whammy' of the pandemic, Brexit and the Government's so called 'levelling up' agenda.
- Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy in Tower Hamlets.
- Inner London faces specific challenges of reduced footfall and areas like the City Fringe and Canary Wharf will have to adapt and require specific support.
- The Government must take further action to support businesses, including:
 1. extending the current VAT relief scheme for the whole of 2021 and extending the business rates relief scheme.
 2. expanding the grants programme delivered by local authorities and adjust it so it is based on the number of businesses within a borough rather than the number of residents.
 3. providing targeted support to night-time economy businesses.

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the government to set out a comprehensive plan to protect jobs and support our economy.
2. For the Mayor and lead Cabinet member to write to the Chancellor making the case for the interventions listed above.
3. To continue to lobby the Government for adequate economic support and work with our business community.
4. To lobby for adequate support for individuals and families affected by the economic impact of Covid-19.